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The History of the Lebanon Valley Railroad

PAPER READ BEFORE THE

LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LEBANON, PA.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1942

BY

Mr. RALPH S. SHAY

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The History
of the
Lebanon Valley Railroad

LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
LEBANON, PA
FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 1963

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Lebanon Valley

The History of the Lebanon Valley Railroad

The story of progress is always an interesting one, and particularly so when one is dealing with the tale of progress in his own community. But progress is not always recognizable on the surface. We do not measure progress wholly in terms of dollars and cents, increases in population, number of paved streets, circulation of our daily newspapers, or the introduction of electric power into a community. If an individual is perfectly honest with himself, he must often admit that he is unable to tell exactly when progress is being made. He cannot even give a fair definition of the word.

We often know that progress is being made when we see that certain innovations have taken place and that certain improvements have been made. One realizes that this metamorphosis has taken place when he finds that he is able to travel a distance in a much shorter period of time than his elders were able to pass over the same route. When we travel this or that road, railway, or waterway, we seldom stop to consider what sacrifices had to be made in order that we might enjoy the use of this particular means of travel. Much more than this, we know little concerning the path of our travel other than the fact that we oftentimes passed over it "as a boy" on our way to school daily or to market twice a week. But this account is not to be a story of transportation across the ages. The author has tried to gather and present the extant materials dealing with a railroad with which most of us are quite familiar—the rails over which the famed "Queen of the Valley" has passed on innumerable runs—THE LEBANON VALLEY RAILROAD, passing through the heart of the fertile and populous valley of which we are residents.

Having felt the need of a railroad at an early date, Lebanon County, through the enterprise, energy, and wealth of the farseeing capitalists of the county, did not long remain unprovided with the "Iron Horse," the speedy and powerful servant of man. The first railway constructed within the borders of the county was the Dauphin and Susquehanna Railroad, running through the Stony Creek Valley between the Second and Third Mountains in the northern part of the county in 1850.¹ Before this date, however, an attempt was begun to persuade the people of Lebanon County, Berks County, and Dauphin County to subscribe to stock in a railroad connecting Reading and Harrisburg by way of Lebanon Borough to be known as the Lebanon Valley Railroad. The efforts resulted in the construction of the road in the period 1853-1858.

The forward-looking citizens of this and other communities were successful in pushing the bill for incorporation through the Legislature in the session of 1835-1836. On January 30 of the latter year, John P. Sanderson of Lebanon, Whig member of the Senate representing Lebanon and Lancaster Counties along with A. Herr Smith of Lancaster, presented a memorial of the citizens of the Borough of Lebanon for the incorporation of a company to construct a railroad from Reading to Harrisburg by way of Lebanon.² The petition was written into a bill which received the approval and signature of the anti-Mason governor of Pennsylvania, Joseph Ritner, on the first day of April, 1836.³ Many of those interested in securing the charter of the road were also interested in the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, incorporated in 1833, and under construction in 1836.⁴ Of the fifty-four

1. William M. Breslin, "A History of Lebanon County Prior to 1876" in *Papers Read Before the Lebanon County Historical Society*, Vol. VI, No. 6; 132.

2. *The Lebanon Courier*, February 4, 1846.

3. *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, passed at the Session of 1835-36*, 385-388.

4. J. V. Hare, "History of the Reading" in *The Pilot and Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Men*, Vol. XI, No. 1.

commissioners named in the Act of Incorporation, the best known, perhaps, are Edward R. Biddle and Thomas Biddle of Philadelphia; Daniel Boas, Samuel Bell, and William Darling of Reading; George Lineaweaver, George W. Kline, Jacob Wise, John Gloninger, John Krause, Thomas Coleman, and Jacob Weidman of Lebanon County; and Simon Cameron of Dauphin County. The Commissioners named, or any five of them, were to procure books for subscription to shares of the stock of the road at fifty dollars a share. The notice of the opening of the books for subscription, which was to be given in two newspapers printed in Dauphin County, two in Lebanon County, two in Berks County, and two daily newspapers in the City of Philadelphia, for at least three weeks prior to the opening of the books, was to include the time and place of the opening of the books. One or more of the commissioners were to be present, and the books were to be open for six hours on six days or until 15,000 shares had been subscribed. If this amount of stock was not taken during this period of time, the commissioners were to adjourn from time to time until 15,000 shares were subscribed. When 4,000 shares were subscribed and five dollars was paid on each share, the commissioners were to certify the same to the governor, who was to issue letters patent and erect the subscribers into a corporate body. This corporation was to have all of the powers, rights, and privileges of any such corporation; i.e., to sue, to be sued, to purchase and hold lands, goods, real, personal, and mixed estate; to sell, mortgage, grant or dispose of it; to declare dividends of profit; to establish and put into execution by-laws, ordinances, and regulations as appeared necessary, etc. However, nothing in the act was to be regarded as giving any banking privileges or any other privileges, liberties, or franchises but those necessary and incident to the making and maintaining of the road.

The president and managers were to have the power to survey and fix a route, as was deemed expedient, for either a double or single track railroad, beginning at a point near the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad at or near Reading

and continuing to a point at Schaefferstown, then through Lebanon to intersect the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad at or below Harrisburg. Six months after the route was determined, an accurate survey of the line was to be made and a map of this survey filed in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. The president and managers were to meet annually on the first Monday of December and transmit to the Auditor General a full statement of the affairs of the company. They were to pay into the treasury a tax of eight per cent. on all dividends exceeding six per cent. on the capital stock paid in.

It is interesting to note that the Legislature reserved, for twenty years, not only the right to reduce and regulate the tolls on the road, but also the right to purchase the road at any time after the road had been completed, by paying the railroad company the costs of construction and keeping it in repair, along with eight per cent. per year thereon after deducting the amount of tolls collected by the company.⁵ Six managers, a president, a secretary and treasurer, and other necessary officers, were to be elected by the stockholders as soon as convenient after the letters patent had been granted. The charter of the company was to become void if the president and managers did not begin to carry on the work delegated to them within three years, and did not complete the work within seven years, or allowed it to decay and become impassable for two years.⁶

5. *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, passed at the Session of 1835-36, 385-388.*

6. *Charters and Acts of the Assembly, State of Pennsylvania, Relating to the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company and Auxiliary Companies (owned, leased, and controlled by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company) and General Railroad Acts of 1849 and 1868 and Supplements.* These last provisions and certain other sections of the act of April 4, 1868 incorporating the P. and R. R.R. Co. were also to apply to the L.V.R.R. Co. These sections dealt with such matters as election of officers, meetings of stockholders, meetings of managers, delivery of certificates of stock to subscribers, notice of payment of installments, bonds to be given by the Treasurer and other officers, payment of dividends, payment of land damages, building of causeways to insure use of roads, suits against the company, penalties for destruction of property of the railroad, rendering of yearly reports of accounts to the Legislature, etc.

The route designated by the act, by way of Schaefferstown, seven miles southeast of Lebanon, was a very roundabout and undesirable one and not what the incorporators had requested. But the grant of the Legislature was accepted in order to gain the concession.⁷

When the project of building the road through the valley was proposed, many of the farmers opposed it for the reason that it would seriously check the demand for their horses and grain to feed them, and that it would also interfere with their business as wagoners. They also objected to the building of the railroad because they feared the counties through which it passed would be called upon to furnish financial aid and that their taxes would be increased as a result of such assistance.⁸

Little interest was shown toward the project, and it was allowed to lag for several years until on January 6, 1840, a supplementary act was passed by the Legislature, and signed by Governor David R. Porter, extending the time for the opening of the books to April 1, 1842.⁹ There are several reasons for the failure of the populace to show a great interest in the road. The effects of the panic of 1837, resulting from the overspeculation in the newer sections of the Country, the increasing sales of land to immigrants at advancing prices, lending by the banks far in excess of their means, the incorporation of "Wildcat Banks," and the refusal of Jackson to allow a recharter to the Second United States Bank, were felt even in the smaller communities, such as Lebanon.¹⁰ The withdrawal of the public deposits and their placement in "Pet Banks" could not be accomplished without the calling in of a great mass of loans and the withdrawal of much bank money from circulation. There was still an almost universal belief that the railroad was merely a passing notion that

7. J. V. Hare, *op. cit.*

8. James M. Swank, *Progressive Pennsylvania*, 173.

9. *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, passed at the Session of 1840*, 19.

10. John Spencer Bassett, *A Short History of the United States 1492-1938*, 432.

would fade into the background in a short time. The people did not recognize that the railroad would replace the canals in a few short years. There was, moreover, a mistrust in the railroads after many men had seen their savings lost in the wildest of schemes to defraud the people. Many of these attempts were impractical and could only result in loss to the investors. There was opposition to railroads, of course, by those who benefited by the continued use of the canals and turnpikes, and who thus opposed the use of any means of transportation that would result in a loss of fortune to them. Moreover, Pennsylvania had just inaugurated a vast system of roads and canals which would deliver a large amount of the western traffic to Philadelphia.

After returning from a trip to Philadelphia in August of 1848, T. T. Worth, editor of *The Lebanon Courier*, bemoaned the fact that Lebanon was not favored by a railroad and that the inhabitants had to be subjected to the jostling, jolting, dusty five-to-six-hours' ride to Reading in a stage coach, when it might be accomplished in an hour. He reported that his ride from Reading to Philadelphia by coach on the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad had taken but two hours.¹¹

Since funds for the road were lacking for want of enterprise among the people, the project lagged until 1850, when the Legislature enacted a further supplement, extending the time of beginning of construction for five years (to 1855), and granting five additional years for completion (1860).¹² In the fall of the preceding year, 1849, William M. Breslin, editor of the *Lebanon Advertiser*, commented in his columns

11. *The Lebanon Courier*, August 12, 1848.

12. On February 5, 1849, Senator Daniel Stine, representing Lebanon and Lancaster Counties, had read a petition for a railroad from Harrisburg to Reading by way of Lebanon. In the next week a bill for such a road was reported from the Committee on Incorporation with recommendations that it be negatived. In March, 1849, the bill was changed to provide for a railroad only from Lebanon to Reading. This bill was not considered again in the session of the Assembly of 1849, but a bill of this sort was again read in the Senate by Stine in January, 1850, before he presented the bill that was eventually considered and passed.

that the failure of the project could be attributed in a large extent to the designation of a certain point through which it was to pass; namely, Schaefferstown. Since there were no means of transporting the iron, minerals, produce, etc., to the markets for four months of the year, except on wagons, it was claimed that the time had come for the citizens of the county to be "up and coming," and urged that they, along with the capitalists of the county, take active steps at the next session of the Legislature to obtain a supplement to the act of incorporation, which would bring the mines to life and enable the new and promising North Lebanon Furnaces to compete with the older establishments.¹³

Senator Daniel Stine, representing Lebanon and Lancaster Counties, read a petition for the revival of the road on February 2, 1850, and introduced a bill for the same on February 7. A similar bill was read in the House on February 28 by William H. Souder of Philadelphia County. The bill was passed in both houses of the Legislature on March 27, and was approved by the signature of Governor William F. Johnston on April 3. Full discussion had taken place in the Senate and a nearly unanimous vote in favor of the bill was received. Little time was consumed in the House, and John W. Killinger, representing Lebanon County in that body, had the bill transferred to the Governor as soon as it had passed. An effort was made to reconsider the vote on the following day. This motion was ruled out of order, since the bill had left the House. A motion to request the return of the bill from the Governor failed to get the necessary two-thirds vote. The times for the beginning and completion of the road were changed to the dates indicated above, and the road was to be constructed without regard to the intermediate points except Lebanon. A tax was placed on all tonnage carried the entire length of the the road, except the ordinary baggage of passengers, at the rate of twenty-five cents per ton, and a tax or duty on passengers at the rate

13. *Lebanon Advertiser*, September 5, 1849.

of twenty cents imposed for each passenger carried the entire length of the road. The section of the act of incorporation of 1836 relating to the rights reserved by the Legislature (to purchase the road twenty years after completion and to reduce the tolls authorized in the act) was also repealed.¹⁴

But the friends of the canals were not disposed to allow a railroad to be built almost parallel to their works without first putting up a battle. Upon completion of the Lebanon Valley Railroad, the Union Canal and the railroad were to occupy the relative position as the canal and the turnpike then did. On April 5, two days after the Governor had signed the supplementary act, Representative Andrew Beaumont of Luzerne County introduced the following resolution in the House: "Resolved, That the Canal Commissioners be and are hereby requested to inform this House what effect, if any, in their opinion, the incorporation of the Lebanon Valley Railroad will have upon the revenues arising from the public works."¹⁵ The resolution was read and, under the rules, put aside for a day. A vote was taken on the resolution on April 10, but it was defeated by a vote of forty-two to forty. On the fifteenth of the same month Messrs. James C. Reid of Erie County and John McLaughlin of Union and Juniata Counties moved to reconsider the vote by which, the resolution calling upon the Canal Commissioners for information relative to the probable injury that would result from the construction of the Lebanon Valley Road, had been lost on the tenth. The motion of Reid and McLaughlin was agreed to by a close vote of 37 to 36. Upon the vote for the resolution itself the number of yeas was fifty and the number of nays seventy. Thus, the resolution was again defeated. The Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad Company made extensive efforts to have a repealing law

14. *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, passed at the Session of 1850*, 340.

15. *Lebanon Advertiser*, April 10, 1850.

passed and enlisted the aid of the newspapers of Harrisburg, but without success.¹⁶

The passage of the supplementary act and its acceptance by the governor seem to have awakened a great deal of ado. Information relative to the road was published in newspapers in Lebanon and other nearby communities. Strong efforts were made by the Central Railroad, leading to the West from Harrisburg, to effect a repeal of the act by the Legislature in 1850. They argued that the construction of the road through the valley would prove a serious detriment to the public improvements. The editor of the *Lebanon Advertiser* remarked that it seemed strange that these same feelings were not expressed in 1850 during the passage of the bill for the York and Harrisburg Railroad, which formed a connection with the Central Railroad analogous to that of the Lebanon Valley. It was also noted that this same group had sat idly by while a grant of a right of way through the northern part of the state had been given in the same year to the New York Railroad Company.¹⁷

It was hoped that the good sense of the Legislature would prevent the repeal, not merely because the opposition was founded solely on selfish motives, but because there were several weighty reasons why the future welfare and prosperity of the community were linked with the building of a railroad through the valley, before a few more days had gone by.

First of all, at Cornwall, within five miles of Lebanon, was the largest and most valuable deposit of iron ore in the State and the next to the largest in the nation. Several enterprising groups were waiting only for greater and better transportation facilities to erect furnaces and mills in the county. Secondly, from about November 25 until about March 25, the grain of the farmers of this section of the State was locked in the granaries, making it impossible for the owners to take advantage of a rise in prices elsewhere. The result-

16. The progress of this resolution in the House is given in the issues of the *Lebanon Advertiser* of April 17 and April 24, 1850.

17. *Lebanon Advertiser*, April 10, 1850.

ing delay in delivery of the grain oftentimes forced them to sell at a loss. Another of the advantages could be seen in the bank transactions of the day. It was reported that in a single day in 1850 one of the banks of Lancaster cashed drafts amounting to a total of thirty thousand dollars, drawn upon the grain which had been sent there a short time previous. Lebanon, too, would experience such economic activity if the velocity of the flow of grain and goods could be increased. This would be the result of being favored by a railroad, as in the case of Lancaster. A resulting turnover of capital in the county would find increased business activity taking place.¹⁸

Breslin, editor of the *Advertiser*, said that the argument that the Lebanon Valley Road would injure the State works amounted to nothing. Not only the tax to be paid by the road, but the increase of taxable property in the county would more than make up for the decrease on the state roads, which would be slight at any rate, and would not exist for a very long period of time.¹⁹

It was urged by the newspapers that the people of Lebanon keep pace with the onward march of progress or they would find themselves as far behind the times as the inhabitants of the remotest island where news and visitors from civilization arrive but once a year. Though they would be looked upon as a healthy, industrious, charitable, and fairlooking lot, and as being blessed with a plentiful supply of the gifts of nature, they would be far outstripped by the surrounding communities in enterprise and improvements even though possessing vast mines of ore.

The opposition to the railroad on the ground that the business would not be sufficient was considered of little significance. The Central Railroad was then being constructed at a rapid pace and the increase of transportation at its completion was expected to employ all the labor that could be put upon the Lebanon Valley Railroad and the

18. *Lebanon Advertiser*, April 10, 1850.

19. *Lebanon Advertiser*, April 10, 1850.

Philadelphia, Columbia, and Harrisburg Railroad between Lancaster and Philadelphia, the continuation of which to Harrisburg was known as the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad.²⁰

A meeting of the commissioners of the road was held at Philadelphia on April 13 of the same year, 1850. William Darling was called to the chair to conduct the meeting, and John Krause was appointed secretary. Other commissioners present were: Coleman Fisher, Thomas Biddle, and William Lewis of Philadelphia; George W. Edwards, Daniel H. Boas, Samuel Bell, and John Miller of Berks County; and George F. Miller and George Lineaweaver of Lebanon County. A resolution was adopted that books be secured and opened for subscription for stock on May 22, at the Exchange in Philadelphia and at the house of M. S. Richards in Reading from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. and on May 23, 24, 25, 27, and 28, or until 15,000 shares were subscribed. The notice, as required by the Act of Assembly, appeared in the newspapers of the City of Philadelphia and the counties of Lebanon, Berks, and Dauphin.

The *Lebanon Advertiser* said that fear was expressed in Philadelphia the Valley Road would tap the increasing trade from the West at Harrisburg and lead it off through Lebanon, Reading, Easton, and across New Jersey to New York, and that the new road would "play jesse" with the State roads and with the Philadelphia, Columbia, and Harrisburg Road. This argument was refuted by Breslin on the ground that the basis for this opposition was more than a fatherly affection for the interests of the State and of Philadelphia. The making of the valley road would no more result in the carrying of trade to New York than would the construction of the Columbia Railroad. A grant would first have to be secured to build a railroad to Easton before any such danger might exist. Even so, it was not to be supposed that Philadelphia would allow her trade to be taken from

20. *Lebanon Advertiser*, April 17, 1850.

her, railroad or no railroad. Moreover, the communities of the Lebanon Valley had as much to make their own people prosperous at their own expense as other cities had at the expense of the State. Besides this, there was a definite need for more means of transportation at the expense of the citizens to the benefit of the State.²¹

A meeting of the citizens of Lebanon was held at the public house of Joseph Reinhard on May first, at which George Lineaweaver, a commissioner of the road, was called to the chair. John George was selected as chairman of the committee of seventeen local citizens appointed to ascertain how much stock would be taken in the county. This committee was to appoint subcommittees for the various townships, if such appointment was deemed expedient. On the following evening the committee met and adjourned to meet on the fourth of May, having agreed to canvass the borough to determine how much stock the citizens would take. The members of the committee reported on the fourth that individuals in the borough had agreed to subscribe to 167 shares of stock. At this same meeting committees were appointed for the several townships to secure subscriptions for stock.

Little effort was made in the summer of 1850 to push the interests of the road. But it was not to be thought that the plan to build the road was to be abandoned. Quite to the contrary; arrangements were being made by the friends of the road to have an engineer on the road immediately after the grain was harvested. It was realized that unless the Central Road was finished and the great western travel brought to Harrisburg, the Lebanon Valley would be a dead stock. The Central Road, terminating at Harrisburg, would be the feeder to the Lebanon Valley and it was deemed a good policy to allow the Central Company to have free play to fill up its subscription of nearly \$7,000,000 first. By June the stock of this latter road had nearly all been taken by

21. *Lebanon Advertiser*, May 1, 1850

extraordinary exertions. The turn of the Lebanon Valley Company would come as soon as the remainder was subscribed. Confidence was expressed by the press that the Valley Road had to be built to give an outlet for the immense western trade. The books of the company were to be reopened in Reading and Philadelphia in a short time. It was urged that since one's position as a stockholder of the road did not in any way prevent him from receiving compensation for damage suffered from the taking of land by the company, the populace were not to refrain from subscribing to stock for fear of losing money in this way. The people of North Lebanon as well as the residents of the borough of Lebanon would benefit by the increase of business.

Patient waiting for the engineer to take to the road immediately after the harvest was not rewarded at once. T. T. Worth, editor of *The Lebanon Courier*, urged that the survey be run that fall or the Legislature would repeal the grant if the survey were allowed to lie over until the next meeting of the Assembly. The securing of the charter could be made by the taking of stock to four thousand shares. But a survey had to be made prior to this.²²

But prospects for the road through the valley appeared to be brightening in the fall of 1850 when a meeting of the commissioners was held in Reading on September 14 to take some definite steps in relation to the road. It was decided to make a preliminary survey and to estimate the costs of construction. The understanding when the meeting adjourned was that the running of the line, which was to require a month's work, was to be begun in a very short time. J. Dutton Steele, a civil engineer, was engaged by the commissioners to survey the route. Steele passed through Lebanon in the second week of October while taking a preliminary glance at the route before beginning the actual location. His statements that the country between Reading and Lebanon was very favorable to a cheap road and that the engineers

22. *The Lebanon Courier*, August 16, 1850.

were to leave Reading during the following week to begin the survey indicated that the road was still holding up its head, and that in the end it would no doubt trail itself from Reading to Harrisburg.²³

As Steele had indicated, the corps of engineers took up the work of making the survey in the next week. The party reached Lebanon by the end of October and expressed a very favorable opinion of the enterprise and considered the valley admirably adapted to the purpose. The engineers completed the survey to Reading in the first week of December. A report was expected within a few days thereafter, but the local papers did not receive a copy of the report submitted by Steele to the commissioners on December 15 from his office in Pottstown, until the first week of 1851. Steele had been aided in his running of the line by N. P. Hobart, Jr. and several assistants of the latter. Less than two months had elapsed between the time that the engineers took to the road and the rendering of the report, during which time 75 miles of line had been traced and the office work completed.

The report handed to the commissioners by Steele was a rather lengthy and complete one. It included a general view of the country, a description of the line surveyed, an estimate of the costs of construction, a comparison of cost per mile with that of other roads, an estimate of income, a comparison with the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and the Pennsylvania Railroad to Lancaster, and the prospects for trade.

The Lebanon Valley, which the proposed route was to traverse, is part of what was then, and still is, a well known fertile agricultural district, about fifteen miles in width and bounded by the Blue Mountains on the north and the South Mountains on the south. The valley is drained chiefly by the Tulpehocken, Quittapahilla, and Swatara Creeks. The first is a tributary of the Schuylkill River, while the Quittapahilla flows into the Swatara, which in turn flows into the Susquehanna River. The Tulpehocken and the Quittapa-

23. *Lebanon Advertiser*, October 16, 1850.

hilla streams are divided by a gently elevated ridge which crosses the valley. At a point three miles east of Lebanon it reaches a height of 544 feet above tides (sea level), which is 271 feet above the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad at Reading and 237 feet above the junction of the Pennsylvania Central Railroad, the Cumberland Valley Railroad, and the Harrisburg and Lancaster Railroad at Harrisburg.

The surface of the populous valley is broken by the Slate Hills near Sinking Springs, the Gravel Hills, and the Swatara Hills east of Hummelstown. On the other hand, the smaller tributaries of the Tulpehocken and the Quittapahilla run on comparatively smooth ground near the base of the South Mountains, but at this point cut deep into the level of the terrain, making it very rugged and much of it impracticable for railroad purposes. These characteristics indicated at once that choice had to be made between the two possible lines of location from Reading to Harrisburg; one following the main streams through their meanderings and thus preserving something like uniformity of grades on each side of the summit of the ridge which crosses the valley, the other line running from one terminus to the other by the most direct route with as slight grades as possible, considering the general level of the country.

Selection of the second route was prompted by the evident increases of distance and curvature that would accompany the choice of the first route; and by a knowledge that the selection of the second path would result in a gain of about thirty miles over the Union Canal, an increase of the average summit height by only 216 feet, and an increase of motive power to an equivalent of about four and one half miles of level road.

Steele said that not only nature, but the laws of the State Legislature, had given the commissioners some fixed points on this second route which greatly reduced the difficulties of construction. Among these first the "sand holes" near Reading Furnace, where the Slate Hills and the South Mountains approach each other so closely as to force the railroad and the

turnpike through a narrow valley; and second, the crossing of the Swatara, west of which was what seemed to him to be the best, if not the only, pass in the Swatara Hills.

The line began nearly opposite the freight depot of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company in Reading, where it curved to the left (encountering some heavy cutting), crossed the Schuylkill River between the Penn Street Bridge and Reese's Mill near the mouth of the Tulpehocken by a bridge 71 feet above water, spanning the river and the Union Canal, and ascended westward at the rate of 26.4 feet per mile for five miles to cross the Harrisburg turnpike near the first toll gate, where the general level of the valley between the South Mountains and Slate Hills near Sinking Springs was reached and the undulating grades begin and continue for forty-four miles to the table lands of the Susquehanna. Here (at Sinking Springs) the line continued south of the turnpike crossing the Cacoosing, Bornhill, and other small tributaries of the Tulpehocken, passed near Wernersville, Reading Furnace, Womelsdorf, and Newmanstown and then crossed Millbach where the eastern slope of the dividing ridge was to be reached and followed to the summit, within three miles of Lebanon, leaving Myers-town two miles to the right and Schaefferstown three miles to the left. From the summit the line crossed the turnpike and passed through the northern part of Lebanon, crossing Market Street between the borough line and Benjamin Zeller's Hotel. It continued on favorable ground to Millers-town (Annville), where the Quittapahilla was to be crossed, and took a direction toward the Swatara bridge of the turnpike company, passing midway between Palmyra and Campbelltown. The Swatara was to be crossed by a bridge seventy-two feet above the water, spanning both it and the Union Canal near the center of the great bend. Two and a half miles beyond the Swatara, the summit, dividing the Swatara and the Susquehanna, was passed; and the table lands of the latter river reached, leaving Middletown (one of the chief lumber markets of the region) three and one-half miles to

the left. At the summit the main westward descent began at the rate of twenty-one feet per mile and continued for seven and one quarter miles to the western terminus. The line passed within one mile of Highspire and reached the precipitate slopes dividing the Susquehanna flats and the table-lands four miles below Harrisburg.

The length of the proposed route was $56\frac{1}{4}$ miles, or four and one-half miles longer than the turnpike. The distance to Philadelphia from Harrisburg by way of Reading would thus be $114\frac{1}{4}$ miles, or $7\frac{1}{4}$ miles longer than the railroad route via Lancaster. The average grade of the proposed route was 26.4 feet per mile, as compared with forty-six feet per mile on the Lancaster route. The total ascent eastward was 453.1 feet and 487.1 westward. The rise of the road from Lebanon to Harrisburg was found to be $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet per mile, and the fall of the line from Lebanon to Reading to be about ten feet per mile.

Divergences from this route had been proposed. One was to have the road pass through Schaefferstown after leaving Newmanstown. A second plan was to have the road veer from the line proposed near the Lebanon County Poorhouse to pass through the southern part of Lebanon and join the planned route east of Millerstown (Annville). A third suggestion was to have the line ascend the slope of Beaver Creek east of Hummelstown to reach the summit of Swatara Hill and then descend along Poorhouse Run to join the present line near Harrisburg. A fourth plan was advocated in a communication from Middletown which claimed that a line passing through that place would be the best and which asked for a survey. Lastly, it was urged that a junction be made with the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad below Reading, thus saving one and a half miles and fifteen minutes' running time. On the other hand, it was argued that the viewing of the road as part of a route to Philadelphia alone would be at the expense of the trade coming from Reading and the Schuylkill Valley.

The cost of the building of the road was estimated at \$1,442,831.27. The average cost of laying one mile of track, including the track, spikes, chain castings, sills, ballast, workmanship, and finishing was \$8,080.08. Thus the cost of laying the track for the entire length of the road would alone amount to \$550,005 (including six miles of siding). The road was divided into five sections for letting of contracts. The cost for each division of the road was as follows (excluding laying of track, but including the cost of earthwork, rockwork, bridges, bridge masonry, dry masonry, superstructure, road bridges, bridge foundations, and culvert masonry):

<i>Division</i>	<i>Miles in Length</i>	<i>Total cost of Division</i>
No. 1	10	\$ 178,024.01
No. 2	11	115,119.63
No. 3	12	41,124.73
No. 4	12	102,238.31
No. 5	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	193,624.71
<hr/>		<hr/>
	56 $\frac{1}{4}$	\$ 630,131.39
Added to this was the cost of laying		
62 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles of track		\$ 550,005.00
Switches, crossings, etc		6,500.00
Contingencies, engineering, etc		114,163.63
Land damages @ \$1.325 per mile		74,531.25
3 small engine houses, turning plat- forms, etc.		30,000.00
5 water stations, and other necessary station buildings		25,000.00
Magnetic telegraph line and instru- ments		12,500.00
<hr/>		<hr/>
		\$1,442,831.27

This estimate was for a single track road with six miles of siding, as indicated, and such station accommodations as were considered indispensable to the opening of the road. There was little side hill work to be done, and the fillings and

24. This amount included the cost of construction of the bridge over the Schuylkill, estimated at \$64,110, the bridge over the Swatara, estimated at \$37,940, and 54 road bridges.

cuttings were generally light with a prevalence of rock. Graduation, masonry, and bridging costs, as estimated by Steele, were for a single track road by which twenty-five percent of the cost of this item, or \$210,043, could be saved. If the masonry were planned and the road located with a view to the ultimate enlargement (double track), such change could be made, when wanted, as cheaply as at the time of construction. A loss would be found on some items, of course, but the gain in cheaper transportation would more than offset this loss. The amount of trade that could be accommodated on a single-track railroad with the aid of a magnetic telegraph and suitable sidings had not yet been appreciated; but certainly enough could be accommodated on the Lebanon Valley Road to yield very ample dividends to its stockholders.

The amount estimated for land damages was for the necessary fencing and the intrinsic value of two tracks, with a view of fixing the bounds in order to protect the company against the necessity of paying for the land required in the future at a higher price, brought about because of the increased value of the road itself.

The cost of the Lebanon Valley Road, including all charges except "machinery," was estimated at \$28,850 per mile. It was claimed by Steele that capitalists might invest their money in the stock of the Lebanon Valley with confidence, for this amount was far below the cost per mile of many dividend-paying railroads in the country, few of which had an advantage in point of commercial position which the Lebanon Valley would enjoy. The Boston and Worcester was built at an average expenditure of \$71,394 per mile; the Boston and Lowell, with branches, at \$70,751 per mile; the Boston and Providence, \$63,590; the Boston and Maine, with branches, \$54,283; and the Eastern at \$53,550 per mile. The only road cited which was constructed at a lower cost per mile than that estimated for the Lebanon Valley was the Georgia Railroad at \$16,766.

In attempting to judge the income of the Valley Road, Steele said that one had to keep in mind that the line would connect the city of Reading, with nearly 16,000 inhabitants, and Harrisburg, with half as many. Both places were then growing in manufacturing importance. He estimated the profit on each passenger carried 56 miles at seventy-five cents, and on each ton of freight at fifty cents for the same distance. His belief was that 30,000 passengers would be carried per year from the trade in the Lebanon and Cumberland Valleys alone and a similar number resulting from the connection with the Pennsylvania Railroad and from trade from other sources. This would bring \$45,000 into the coffers of the company, above and beyond expenses of carrying the same. Freight from the local trade of the two valleys would amount to eighty thousand tons per year. Added to that would be thirty thousand tons to be gleaned from the roads terminating at Harrisburg. Thus the road would be found to have a profit of \$55,000 for the carriage of freight and total profits amounting to \$100,000 per year. This amounted to upwards of seven per cent return on the necessary investment. Though these figures fell below what may have been reasonably expected from the experience on other roads, both in quantity of trade and income to be derived, they would be greatly exceeded in a few years after the opening of the road and upon the completion of the other works then in progress.

Steele reported that six hours were then consumed by the passenger trains from Philadelphia to Harrisburg by way of Lancaster; while the running time between these same points via the Lebanon Valley Railroad and the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad would not exceed three and one-half hours. It was not likely that the time on the Lancaster route would be reduced below five hours, and it would be just as easy for the time on the Valley Road to be reduced below three and one-half hours as it would be for the Pennsylvania Railroad to reduce below five hours. Hence, the Lebanon Valley route would have an advantage of one and one-half hours in the

passenger traffic which would be sufficient to secure preference for the Valley Road.

It was Steele's opinion that it would be difficult to find, in Pennsylvania, an unimproved route promising greater advantages than that of the Lebanon Valley Railroad. A large amount of local trade alone would be obtained from the fertile and thickly settled countryside traversed, and the number of towns within the valley and from the iron manufactures in Lebanon County. The Cornwall ore banks, five miles to the south of Lebanon, were the richest and most valuable in Pennsylvania. The coal of Pinegrove, thirty miles from Lebanon, was then reached by the Union Canal. The coal lands of Fishing Creek were five miles nearer, as was the semi-bituminous coal of Stony Creek.

Three anthracite furnaces and seven charcoal furnaces, then being supplied from the Cornwall deposits, were capable of producing 25,000 tons of pig metal yearly. In 1849, the previous year, thirty thousand tons of coal from Pinegrove were delivered at Lebanon, chiefly for the purpose of smelting iron ore. In 1849 the tonnage on the Union Canal was 76,166 tons, exclusive of coal from Pine Grove. Of this amount 21,322 tons was lumber from Middletown, and the balance of 54,844 could be considered as the local trade furnished by the valley to the Union Canal, of which 11,003 tons was flour, 30,120 tons accrued from the iron manufactures, and 23,721 tons was miscellaneous freight.

If one were to doubt the advisability of building the Valley Road, he had but to look to the West, where an important concentration of internal improvements was found at Harrisburg. The first of these was the Cumberland Valley Railroad to Hagerstown, forming a line seventy-four miles southwest from the state capital, which was estimated to throw fifty thousand tons of freight upon the Valley Road annually. The Pennsylvania Central Railroad and the State works, both reaching to Pittsburgh, and the North and West Branch Canal, as far as completed, would give about 475 miles of important branching from the western terminus of

the proposed road through the Valley. In 1849 the total tonnage passing eastward and westward through Harrisburg amounted to 569,580 tons, two-thirds of which was carried by the Tidewater Canal and one-third by the Columbia Railroad.

Moreover, the Pennsylvania Central Railroad, passing through the center of the State for 250 miles and intersecting the well-known iron region of the Juniata and the rich bituminous coal fields of the Alleghenies, would be opened to Pittsburgh in 1852. Even before that point was reached, however, a continuous railroad would be built from Pittsburgh to Cleveland and Cincinnati and across the state of Ohio into Indiana, thus making 500 miles of railroad centering at Pittsburgh from the West. Turning to the southwest, the individual discovered that the prospects for trade were but little less promising. Surveys were already being made for the extension of the Cumberland Valley Railroad to form an intersection with the Baltimore and Ohio Road south of the Potomac at a point one hundred miles from Harrisburg.²⁵

With the delivery of Steele's report of his survey and the securing of the charter of the road from a repeal by the Legislature by the subscription to four thousand shares in the road by John Tucker, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, in December of 1850, there were indications that the company would be organized immediately, that the contracts for the construction would soon be let, and that the operations for grading and levelling would be begun shortly. The *Reading Gazette and Democrat* of December 21 reported that the books had been opened for a few days before the paper went to press and that additional subscriptions to a large amount had been taken. Up to this time, however, Philadelphia had taken the bulk of the stock. It was hoped by J. Lawrence Getz, the editor of the *Gazette*, that Lebanon and Berks Counties would not hesitate to contribute a liberal portion to aid an enterprise of incalculable

25. J. Dutton Steele, *Report and Survey of the Lebanon Valley Railroad*.

importance to both.²⁶

In their annual report to the stockholders of their company on January 13, 1851, the president and managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company warmly commended the Lebanon Valley Railroad as follows:

"They may, however, without impropriety, call your attention to the fact that the charter of the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company, extending from Reading to Harrisburg, has been granted; that any aid afforded for the speedy completion of that work will react directly upon this company, and that as soon as it has been accomplished, this company, by its means, will be enabled to enter into successful competition for the trade of the Great West."²⁷

A further supplementary act to the act of incorporation, which passed the Assembly in the session of 1851 and was signed by Governor Wm. F. Johnston in April, 1851, lowered the rate of tax to be paid by the railroad into the treasury of the Commonwealth to ten cents for each passenger carried from one terminus of the road to the other and the duty on freight carried between the same points to the rate then or thereafter to be imposed on the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. At that time the rate paid by the latter company was three mills per ton per mile. The act of the previous year reviving the railroad had placed the tax at twenty cents for each passenger passing over the full length of the road and at twenty-five cents for each ton of freight transported the same distance. A proviso was added in 1851 which stated that nothing in the act was to be construed to deprive the Legislature from increasing the rate of taxation to the amounts imposed by the act of 1850.²⁸

The editor of the *Courier* reported in the issue of March 18, 1851, that he was authorized to make a proposition to the public by "someone who is willing to obligate himself to con-

26. *Reading Gazette And Democrat*, December 21, 1850.

27. *Annual Reports of the Presidents and Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company to the Stockholders, 1833 and 1838 to 1855.*

28. *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Passed at the Session of 1851, 625.*

struct a single track railroad from Harrisburg to Reading over the route lately surveyed for one and a half million dollars." The individual, whose name was not disclosed, was willing to allow \$150,000 to remain in the hands of the directors until the road had been fully and satisfactorily tested. The editor urged that this offer be accepted, the party making the proposition having experience and responsibility and having accomplished similar undertakings before this time. No effort was made to persuade the citizenry further to take up this extended offer, or to secure the name of the one extending the proposition to the public. Neither did the individual again press the people or the commissioners to accept his offer.

At this time a great number of roads from the north, south, and west terminated at Harrisburg where the burden of their cars was unloaded. The only outlet to the east for all the travel and trade over these roads (namely, the Cumberland Valley Railroad, the Maryland Line Road passing through York, the Pennsylvania Central Railroad, and the Williamsport Road, which was soon to be completed) was the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad. The capacity of this latter road was not sufficient to handle all the travel and produce of the Central Railroad, much less that of the other roads. Beyond this, Edward F. Gay, Civil Engineer, in *On the Survey for the Improvement on the Curves on the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad*, reported that in its condition at the time, the road, also known as the Columbia Railroad, was inadequate to afford accommodation for the trade and travel that could be reasonably anticipated upon the completion of the Pennsylvania Railroad to the Ohio River. Gay proposed making changes to lessen the curves on the State Road to the extent of a saving of $24\frac{5}{8}$ miles at a cost of \$1,058,585, nearly as much as would be required to complete the whole Lebanon Valley Railroad. However, another railroad to Philadelphia had to be made, despite the effectiveness of any proposed changes on the State Road. The editor of the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, J. Knabb,

argued that the natural and best route was through the Lebanon and Schuylkill Valleys. He further claimed that a road from Harrisburg to Reading would greatly increase the value of property along the line and probably double the business of the city of Reading. Property that could not be rented, or if rented, paying about three per cent. would in the future pay a good interest, and the population would probably increase from seventeen thousand to forty thousand.²⁹

The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company sent an agent to England in April, 1851, to present to its foreign stockholders the survey of the Lebanon Valley Road and the claims for the advantages of the road. Twenty-one thousand shares of the stock of the Philadelphia and Reading were in foreign hands. Since the expectations were that the Valley Railroad would receive its greatest aid from the Reading Company, the consent of so large a number of stockholders was considered necessary. T. T. Worth said, in the *Courier* of May 9, 1851, he believed that the managers of the Philadelphia and Reading were insincere and were handling the Lebanon Valley project as a scheme of speculation. The editor of the *Courier* became a bit more skeptical of the motives of the Reading Company when no report was forthcoming early in June. Editor Worth wrote that this excuse on behalf of the Philadelphia and Reading Company would not hold water any longer and that the company must either give a better one or acknowledge that they were not doing what they had promised.³⁰ The agent ultimately returned before the end of the month and reported favorably concerning the opinion of the foreign shareholders toward the Valley Road project.

Meanwhile prospects for the road appeared to be "looking up," in the language of the day, when the chief engineer of the road, Richard B. Osborne, arrived in Reading in the first week

29. Edward F. Gay, *On the Survey for the Improvement on the Curves on the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad: The Lebanon Courier*, April 11, 1851; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, April 19, 1851.

30. *The Lebanon Courier*, June 6, 1851.

of June and announced his intention to make the city his permanent residence for the next three years. John Tucker, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company and associate of those appointed commissioners to incorporate the Valley Road and press the work to completion had recommended that the commissioners send for Osborne, who had been in charge of construction of many large public works because of his ability and aggressiveness. Later in June it was rumored in Lebanon that sufficient stock in the road had been taken to assure its early success. This proved to be "all gammon," as the townspeople were accustomed to say, for far from a sufficient amount of stock had been subscribed.

The people of the valley seemed to have lost all interest in the project as the summer turned to autumn. Moreover, from movements on foot in Philadelphia, it appeared that the road would prove a failure before the first spade would be lifted. The Dauphin and Susquehanna Coal Company, the lands of which bordered on the north of Lebanon County, and which possessed both wealth and influence, seemed to have taken the lead in this movement. The completion of fifteen miles of road from Cold Springs in Lebanon County to a connection with the railroad near Pine Grove would take from under the friends of the Valley Road the main prop on which they had advocated their road; namely, the connection of the Central Railroad with Philadelphia by a safer and faster route than the State Road through Lancaster. If these fifteen miles were completed, it was argued by Breslin of the *Lebanon Advertiser*, the inhabitants of Lebanon would be set high and dry into the backwood. Breslin said that he did not believe that the stock of the Lebanon Valley could not be sold. On the other hand, he did believe that the course of some who claimed to be friends of the road would be denounced by the citizens when properly revealed and recognized. Moreover, *The Philadelphia Daily News* urged the completion of the road from Cold Springs to Pine Grove with arguments that might have been as well applied to the

Lebanon Valley Railroad—the furnishing of semi-bituminous coal from the Dauphin County deposits to steamers.³¹ The unfair dealings of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, described by editor Worth as a legislature-favored corporation whose president held the charter of the Valley Railroad in his breeches and which had a large interest in the coal lands in Schuylkill County and desired a road that would pass through these same lands to connect with the Central Road to Harrisburg, was one of the reasons given to the many questions in 1852 as to why the road was not being built. To insure the plan of the Reading Company, it was necessary to kill the Lebanon Valley Railroad.³² A want of enterprise among the people still existed throughout 1852, though it appeared for a while in May that there were really promising prospects that Lebanon would shortly be brought into connection with the rest of the world by means of railroads and engines driven by steam power.

At long last in 1853 it seemed that an effort to build the road was to be put forth that would not result in defeat but in the construction of the railroad through the Valley. The growing interest that was being manifested in the building of the road culminated in the holding of a preliminary meeting in Reading on February 5 “to put the ball in motion.” The people of Berks County were becoming more sensitive to its importance and were stirring themselves in its behalf, while similar movements in the direction of ensuring its speedy construction were being made in Lebanon. *The Lebanon Courier* of January 21, 1853, reported that “a certain interest” made a very fair and liberal proposition that should be accepted at once, if a sincere one. If the people of Lebanon County would take stock to one hundred thousand dollars and the farmers along the route would take stock for their damages, the road would be made. The Philadelphia and Reading Company offered to see the line constructed at

31. *Lebanon Advertiser*, August 20, 1851.

32. *The Lebanon Courier*, March 26, 1852.

a calculated cost of \$1,500,000 if the citizens along the line would raise \$400,000.³³

The editor of *The Reading Press*, quoted by the *Courier* of February 18, proposed that the populace of Dauphin County take stock for \$120,000, Lebanon County, \$120,000, and Berks County, including the City of Reading, \$100,000 with the landlords along the line probably taking stock for \$60,000 in payment of damages. The balance of \$340,000 necessary could be secured by the issue of bonds by Lebanon County and Borough for \$100,000, Dauphin County and Harrisburg for \$100,000 and Berks County and Reading for \$100,000. The counties and municipal corporations by which these bonds should be issued were to receive six per cent interest annually on these sums. It was not proposed to ask for subscriptions from the counties and municipalities until power would be given by law to the proper authorities to do so and until the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company had been authorized to guarantee to stockholders, corporations, and individuals the payment of six per cent annually.

A bill had been introduced in the Senate of the State Legislature, in the earlier part of the session of 1853, to repeal the act placing a tax on passengers passing over the York and Cumberland Railroad. William M. Heister, representing Berks County in the Senate, read an amendment to this bill that would abolish the tax on the passengers carried on the Lebanon Valley as well. This bill, with the suggested amendment, was passed by the Legislature in February. On March 7 Heister submitted an additional supplement to the act of incorporation that would give to the City of Reading the right to subscribe to six thousand shares of the Lebanon Valley Railroad, the Borough of Lebanon to two thousand shares, and the County of Lebanon to four thousand shares, provided the people of these districts so decided at an election held for that purpose. The bill passed the several readings required by the rules of the Senate, and was passed with a vote of approval in the House on March

33. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, March 5, 1852.

22. Several other sections were added to the supplementary act by the Legislature before it was signed by Governor Wm. Bigler on the fifth of April of the same year, 1853.

It is curious that in the previous year, 1852, Governor Bigler had vetoed a bill to authorize corporations to subscribe to stock of the Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroad Company. At that time Governor Bigler had opposed the bill for subscription of stock of the Ohio and Pennsylvania on the grounds that inasmuch as the payment of stock would probably be made in certificates of stock of \$5, \$10, \$20, or \$50, or in bonds or other evidences of indebtedness of similar denomination, a fictitious capital would be created. The Legislature was advised by Bigler to be cautious in the creation of corporate powers, since a project that may be wise and proper in itself may be secured through the use of means that are to be used to greatly lessen its legitimate purpose. The powers so granted might be exercised to do infinite harm to the people. The bonds of corporations so subscribing might, under the pressure of financial difficulties, be sold at a sacrifice. Bigler said, moreover, that there was also the danger of the influence that the consolidation of numerous corporations might have upon the independence of the elective franchise and the infringement upon individual rights, as well as the tendency toward a concentration of corporate powers with the result that the corporation might act as one grand unchecked monopoly.³⁴

The supplementary act authorized an increase of the capital stock of the Lebanon Valley Road to thirty thousand shares. The directors were permitted to borrow money not exceeding \$1,000,000 for the completion of the line. Bonds of the company, of not less than one thousand dollars and bearing interest at a rate of not more than seven per cent, were to be issued on the mortgage of the road. These bonds were to be converted into stock if deemed advisable. The corporate authorities of the city of Reading were authorized

34. *Pennsylvania Archives*, edited by George Edward Reed. Fourth Series—*Papers of the Governors*, Volume VII, 1845-1858; 526-533.

to subscribe to six thousand shares of the stock of the company, the County of Lebanon to four thousand shares, and the Borough of Lebanon to two thousand. To secure money to make payment for the stock, the City, County, and Borough were to issue bonds to bear six per cent interest. Any corporation holding four thousand shares or more was to be permitted to elect a director, and any two corporations holding four thousand shares together were to be privileged to elect a director. Elections were to be held in Reading, the Borough of Lebanon, and Lebanon County, at which time the qualified voters were to vote "for the subscription" or "against the subscription." Four weeks' notice of the elections was to be given in two newspapers in each district.

By the same act absent stockholders were to be permitted to vote by proxy, except those males living within one mile of the place of election. Women stockholders, however, were to be allowed to vote by proxy, irrespective of the distance that they lived from the place of the election. Twenty-two commissioners were appointed in addition to those named in the act of incorporation of 1836. Among these were John Tucker of Philadelphia, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company; H. H. Muhlenberg, Henry A. Muhlenberg, William Strong, G. A. Nicolls, and General William H. Keim, of Berks County; John Weidman, Simeon Guilford, Robert Coleman, and John W. Killinger, of Lebanon County; and John C. Kunkel of Dauphin County. The company was also given the right to construct and use a branch railroad from the Borough (of Lebanon) to a point near Cornwall, the site of the large deposits of iron ore.³⁵

The idea of municipal subscriptions was not a new one. Just three years before this time, the City of Philadelphia had taken stock in the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to \$2,000,000 and had issued bonds to pay for the stock.

35. *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Passed at the Session of 1853, 296-298.*

Recently the same city had subscribed to stock in the Sunbury and Erie Road for \$2,000,000, to \$750,000 in the Hempfield Railroad, and to an undetermined amount in the Marietta and Ohio Railroad. Until the lines were completed Philadelphia was to receive six per cent interest. After the roads were completed the city was to receive profits or earnings in proportion to the amount of stock which the city held of the total shares. In 1853, a total of \$8,150,000 had been subscribed to stock of railroad companies by the City of Philadelphia; \$3,450,000 by Allegheny County; \$7,830,000 by the City of Baltimore; \$3,500,000 by the City of New Orleans; \$2,400,000 by the City and County of St. Louis; and \$1,100,000 by Ohio County (Virginia) and the city of Wheeling.³⁶

A meeting of the commissioners was held in Reading at the public house of Daniel Housum on April 8, three days after the governor had affixed his signature to the supplement. Samuel Bell was appointed President of the meeting and Henry A. Muhlenberg was called to act as Secretary. Resolutions were passed for the holding of an election of a president, six directors, and a treasurer and secretary in the public house of Tobias Barto in Reading on May 4, 1853. It was also resolved that the books should be reopened for further subscription until May 4: by John Tucker in the offices of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company in Philadelphia; by M. S. Richards, one of the commissioners, in his office at Reading; by Simeon Guilford at the public House of Henry Segrist in Lebanon; and by James McCormic in Harrisburg. All the sums of money received by the commissioners were to be paid to Dr. H. H. Muhlenberg, who was appointed receiver. All the records of subscriptions were also to be returned to Dr. Muhlenberg.

The friends of the road in Lebanon also held a meeting at the Court House on April 23, at which time committees were appointed to take steps to insure a complete canvassing

36. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, March 5 and June 11, 1853.

of the county for subscriptions. Letters were read at the meeting from several prominent men, urging the importance of the road to the people of the valley. As evidence of his sincerity and good intentions, Simon Cameron, one of the writers, promised to make an individual subscription of \$10,000. A letter from William Strong of Reading stated that a very fine sum in the form of subscriptions might be expected from the citizens of that city who were alive to the importance of the road. The commissioners met again on April 27 at Housum's Hotel to make the arrangements to conduct the election of officers.

The *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of March 23, 1853, reported that subscriptions amounting to \$94,250 were made in Reading in the week of April 17 up to Friday noon. In the issue of the *Journal* of April 30, the editor reported that total subscriptions in Reading at that time amounted to \$150,000. Block committees were appointed in Reading for the wards to solicit subscriptions to see that a proper effort was made toward taking of stock by the citizens to half a million dollars. The subscription thus far had been confined to a score of individuals, but these efforts were to be made to reach the public generally.

At the meeting of the stockholders in Reading to elect officers on May 4, the following were elected: President, General Simon Cameron; Managers, John Tucker of Philadelphia; Samuel Bell, William Strong, and Isaac Eckert of Reading; and Robert Coleman and John W. Killinger of Lebanon; and Secretary and Treasurer, Dr. H. H. Muhlenberg. Cameron and Bell had been named commissioners of the company by the act of incorporation of 1836. Tucker, Eckert, Strong, Coleman, Killinger, and Muhlenberg had been appointed as additional commissioners by the supplementary act of 1853. Cameron, a native of Lancaster County, had edited newspapers at Doylestown and Harrisburg prior to his election to the United States Senate by the Democrats in 1843. Cameron became a Republican after the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1850 and was

again elected Senator in 1857 and was an active member of the Senate until he resigned to become Secretary of War in 1861. Not agreeing with Lincoln on the question of freeing and arming the slaves, he resigned and accepted the post of Minister to Russia. He was elected Senator once more in 1867 and continued to serve in that capacity for ten years. Cameron was also president of the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad Company and aided in the construction of the Cumberland Valley Railroad, and the North Central Railroad to Sunbury, and the Tidewater Canal.³⁷

At the time of election of officers, stock amounting to over two hundred thousand dollars had been taken in Reading alone, and a number of additional shares had been taken in lieu of damages by property holders along the line of the road. A week later, the individual subscriptions in Reading totalled \$250,000.

A special joint meeting of the Select and Common Councils of Reading took place on the tenth of May to consider the question of referring the proposed subscription to the Lebanon Valley by the City of Reading to a vote of the citizens. William Strong and H. H. Muhlenberg appeared as a committee for the managers of the Company to address the councils on the subject. A resolution to hold an election to decide for or against the subscription of four thousand shares on June 15 was read and passed by a vote of eleven to three, one member declining to vote. Copies of the supplementary act authorizing the subscription, the address of the Committee to the Councils, and the Resolutions of Councils were printed in the issue of the *Journal* on May 20, along with the notice of the election to be held to decide the question on June 15.

From this point until the vote was made, the columns of the Reading newspapers were filled with arguments for and

37. L. S. Shimmel, *A History of Pennsylvania*, 307-308; M. Luther Heisey, "Railroad and Bridge Builders of Lancaster" in *Papers Read Before The Lancaster County Historical Society*, Vol. XLIV. No. 4; 70.

against the subscriptions. Even the briefest summary of these claims would fill pages. In letters to the editors, the advocates argued that the investment would prove a valuable one because of the fertility of the country along the route, and the increased value of the local improvements. As a city along the outlet of all the roads leading to Harrisburg and as a place where the limestone, coal, and ore of the nearby counties would be brought together for smelting and manufacture into iron products, Reading would experience great prosperity. The road would be built at a comparatively small expense and the subscription could be made without additional taxes. The making of the road would not injure the Union Canal or increase the state taxes. Rather than postpone the time when the streets would be lighted and the water supply bettered, as an anti-subscriptionist had argued, the subscription would hasten the coming of these improvements. The benefits of the road would not be felt alone in the northern part of Reading through which it was to pass, but all Reading would share as the city became a center of manufacturing. If the people of Reading would vote for it, so would Lebanon. Otherwise, the populace in the latter place would support the cause of the Cornwall and Phoenixville Railroad and devote all their energies to that line. Only one road carried to the east the burden of the five railroads leading to Harrisburg from the west, and that was the old, crooked, slow and badly managed Columbia Railroad. The subscription would not increase the rent of the poor man as some would have the people believe, but it would increase the value of labor of the poor man and of the real estate of all holding it. Two hundred thousand dollars might seem a large sum at that time, but it would be a mere pittance thirty years from that date, when the beneficial effects of the road would be felt.

These letters, sent to the editors by the friends of the municipal subscription, were signed, as was the custom of the day, by "A Citizen," "A.B.," "Subscription," "Kappa," "S.J.P." and "X". The individual writing under the last

alias claimed that this was truly a "home" question, that it was a matter of deciding whether Reading was to assume the foremost place among her sister cities of the State or whether the people were to be satisfied with what one railroad had done for them, besides doubling the population of the city in the previous decade. He summed up his arguments as follows: "If we fail to build it, we commit social suicide, and the city, just beginning a vigorous manhood, will be stabbed by the act of our citizens."³⁸ An eleventh-hour appeal was made to the citizens by a letter sent to the *Journal* by the committee representing the company, showing the many benefits to Reading upon the completion of the road with connections with roads leading from the west, the necessity for the municipal subscriptions, and the assurance that the city would not be burdened by the subscription.

Opponents of the subscription seemed just as numerous as the advocates of the subscription. Letters to the editor of the *Journal*, signed by "Sid," "A Taxpayer," and "N.S.", expressed the sentiments of many that the road would be of benefit to only a few; i.e., to those who owned an ore mine who wished to get their ore to market more cheaply, to those who desired to get this same ore at a lower cost, to those who owned lands where the depots were to be placed, to those who owned machine shops, and to a few wealthy individuals such as the bank officer, the financier "from a distance," and the enterprising contractor, all of whom seemed particularly interested. There were also the beliefs that there would be no letting of contracts by sections and perhaps only a few subcontracts, that the men who were to determine the cost of the road were also the ones who would pocket the price of it, that the road could be made without a municipal subscription, and that a cotton factory, a steam forge, an anthracite furnace, and a rolling mill were all beneficial to the business of the city, but that it would seem strange if those engaged in these industries would call upon the city

38. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, May 21, 1853.

for money to establish these works. Others claimed that money was needed by the city to make more necessary improvements and to support more police. "Sid" cited instances in the past of a similar nature when the people had been fooled by "public spirited citizens" such as the Farmers' Bank of Reading, the Cemetery, the Cotton Factory, the Water Company, the Steam Forge, and the Gas Company. Letters from "Progress," "Liberty," "Reason," "O.P.Q." and "A Citizen" opposed the subscription because the managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad had not fulfilled their promise to take the remainder of the stock when shares to \$400,000 had been taken by the populace. If the road did not yield enough income, the stockholders and bondholders of the city would suffer. It appeared that the managers would sell out the stockholders by keeping down the value of the stock and then buy it behind the scenes at a very low percentage of the par value. Since the company was authorized to borrow \$1,000,000 if it chose to do so, why had the managers not used this method to secure funds to build the road? The tax rate of Reading would be raised from four mills to eight mills. One writer with a sense of humor, who signed his note "Suggs," said that since the debt of the City of Reading was only \$55,000 as compared to that of Lancaster, which was \$190,000, the people of Reading could have a respectable debt and go ahead of a town with a smaller population if they took the \$200,000 subscription.³⁹

The subject was of such importance and communications were flowing into the offices of the newspapers in such numbers, that the editors were unable to print letters pertaining to other matters, much less all those dealing with this question. Knabb in his *Journal* of June 11, said that he was unable to reprint the letters of Judge Black, and that, of one who called himself "Observer" in the Issue of June 9 of the *Ledger*.

39. Letters to which the author has referred are found in the issues of the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of May 21, May 28, June 4, and June 11, 1853.

The newspapers of Reading took sides in the public discussion of the issue, as one might suppose. The *Adler* opposed the subscription; the *Gazette* said not a word editorially one way or the other but printed the letters of its readers who wished to express themselves in its columns on the matter; the *Press* and the *Journal* favored the subscription, expressing the belief that the city would benefit to the extent of ten times the amount asked.⁴⁰ The editor of the latter paper stated that it had been suggested that it would be good Whig policy to oppose the measure. He admitted that it probably would, but that his paper would not oppose it merely for political considerations, inasmuch as he believed that the city would benefit twelve times over because of the subscription.⁴¹

In the meantime, the friends of subscription and the opponents of the measure were using other means than the press to win adherents to their individual causes. The advocates of subscription called a meeting in the Odd Fellows' Hall in Reading for June 4, for the expressed purpose of "adopting such measures, and hearing such arguments and facts, as will secure the vote of the people on the 15th of June next, in favor of this great enterprise."⁴² Handbills, distributed on the third of June, calling this meeting, contained seventeen hundred names. The meeting was addressed by William Strong, Andrew M'Clain, and Jacob Hoefman. Another meeting of this faction was held in the East Market Square on June 11.

The opposition held a monster meeting in the West Market Square on June 7, at which assemblage speeches were made by General George M. Keim and Charles Davis. The anti-subscriptionists, also known as "The Old Fogies," held a last grand rally on the evening of June 14, just prior to the election. The advocates of the subscription outdid the opposition on this night, however, by staging a torch light parade.

40. Morton L. Montgomery, *History of Berks County in Pennsylvania*, 458; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, May 21, 1853.

41. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, May 21, 1853.

42. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, May 28, 1853.

Music was provided by the Reading Rifles' Band, the Artillerists' Band, Wittich's Band, and the German Band. Workmen from the shops, mills, and factories were among those in the procession carrying placards containing mottoes, pictures, and caricatures, and drawing blazing tar barrels and twenty to thirty "transparencies" (floats). About fifteen hundred to two thousand participated in the procession two-thirds of a mile long, carrying five hundred torches. The procession halted in the Western Market Square and in front of King's U. S. Hotel, where several addresses were made. The "War of the Fogies" had grown decidedly interesting, but it was well that the election to settle the point was at hand, for, according to Editor Knabb, the whole town was in danger of spontaneous combustion.⁴³ At the time of the election on the matter of subscription in Reading, over \$400,000 in stock had been subscribed. Reading led with over \$250,000, Philadelphia citizens had taken over \$60,000, and Lebanon and Harrisburg had each pledged \$50,000 to the road.

The vote on the question on June 15 resulted in a victory for the friends of the road; 1680 votes were cast for subscription, while 708 ballots were marked "against the subscription." The interest on the matter can be judged from a comparison to the election for mayor in the spring of the year when 1899 votes were cast, or 489 less than at the election concerning the subscription. Every ward in the city rolled up a majority in favor of subscription. The result of the election was received in the evening by the lighting of bonfires and the setting off of Chinese crackers and rockets. Transparencies were again carried in a torch light procession. When the *Gazette* of Reading, which opposed the subscription, published a list of the forty most active citizens favoring subscription, and the *Adler* had printed a list of eighty names, the editor of the *Journal* proposed that the editors of these papers print the names of all the 1680 who

43. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, June 11, 1853.

had favored the measure, since complaints had been heard on all sides by persons whose names had been omitted. He added in an ironical tone that a list of the names of the 708 who had opposed subscription be "sealed up in an *old wool hat* and, along with the files of the *Adler* and returns of the election, deposited in the corner of the curb-stone of the new market house extension for future generations as a record of the gentlemen of the olden times who were born 100 years too late."⁴⁴

A committee of citizens, who had been opposed to the two hundred thousand dollar subscription by the city to the stock of the Valley Road, set out for Harrisburg on the night of the election, upon hearing the results of the vote, to petition the Supreme Court, then in session at the State Capitol, to grant an injunction restraining the city councils from issuing bonds until the constitutionality of the act of the Legislature was tested. The group was led by John F. Moers and his son, who presented a petition for injunction signed by themselves and thirty-one of their friends. A bill of equity was filed on the day after the election by counsel for the plaintiffs, Mr. Davis. Sheriff Potteiger of Berks County was busily engaged serving writs upon the members of the City Councils, officers and managers of the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company, and several citizens of Reading. The individuals upon whom these writs were served were ordered to appear at a hearing of the case on the 18th of July at Sunbury at the session of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania for the Northern District of the State. However, the case was transferred to the session at Philadelphia to begin on July 25, since the matter was a question arising in the Eastern District of the State Supreme Court. The plaintiffs, represented by lawyers Smith, Davis, and Banks, argued that the company had become dead by virtue of the fact that seventeen years had elapsed between the time of incorporation of the company and the passing of the sup-

44. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, July 16, 1853.

plementary act providing for municipal subscription, that the city had no legal authority to subscribe, that the whole thing was a fraud upon the people of Berks County to submit the question to the people of the entire County of Lebanon, while only the populace of the City of Reading were permitted to vote in Berks County, and that the citizens of Reading knew but little about the supplementary act until it was passed. These arguments were opposed by William Strong and St. George T. Campbell, counsels for the defendants.

At the same session of the court, there were three other cases before the court involving the constitutionality of the principle of municipal subscription. One was against the Council of West Chester and the other two were against the City of Philadelphia. The arguments on the case were closed on the July 27. It was decided when the Philadelphia Session of the Court was adjourned on the July 29 that a decision would be rendered in all four cases at the September session at Pittsburgh. The court assembled at Pittsburgh on the sixth of September and declared, by a vote of three to two that the subscription could be made. With all five of the judges delivering an opinion, the principle was upheld by Judges Black, Woodward, and Knox; the dissenters were Judges Lewis and Lowrie. The court had stood equally divided until Justice Knox, the new judge on the court, read his opinion favoring the principle of subscription.

The majority opinion, as read by Judge Black, stated that an Act of the Assembly authorizing the subscription by a city to the stock of a railroad company was not forbidden by the Constitution of the Commonwealth (Article I, Section 13). The act was not a delegation of legislative powers, for a provision of the act required that the powers conferred upon the municipal corporations should not be exercised until approved by a vote of the inhabitants. Since the legislative power over municipalities was absolute, the powers of the local councils could be taken away and invested in the people. Such an act did not impair the obligation of existing contracts, nor did it attempt to create a new contract, but

merely authorized the municipalities to make a contract, if they saw proper to do so. Increasing the privileges of a city, or assigning it new duties, was not an extension of its charter. It was not a taking of private property for public use without compensation, though it subjected the owners of stock to greater burdens than before. The making of the railroad was not a private affair, but was a public work, inasmuch as the State had declined to make these improvements herself and had permitted it to be done by a private company. The local authorities had the right to tax for local improvements of this sort as they had to lay a general tax for any public purpose. Injunction was refused.⁴⁵ A jubilee was held in Reading upon reception of the news of the decision of the court.

In the meantime the Town Council of Lebanon had met on May 20 and resolved that an election should be held in the Borough on June 29 to decide whether a subscription to one thousand shares should be made or not. A proviso was added that the subscription would be made only if Lebanon were made a point in the line. The impression had gotten abroad that those who had control of the enterprise planned to give Lebanon "the go-by" and make a road by way of Cornwall along the foot of the mountain up to Middletown. Cameron, president of the road, had spent the night of May 17 in the Borough and said that he had no apprehension about the success of the venture. Jacob Weidle, a member of Council, read a petition presented to the Council by a committee composed of John Killinger, William Strong, and H. H. Muhlenberg, representing the managers, showing that the investment would be a profitable one, that the road would promote the prosperity of the Borough, and that the subscription could be made without inconveniences to the people

45. Frederick C. Brightly, *Brightly's Digest of Penna. Reports*, 1754-1877, Columns 324, 427; George Wharton Pepper and William Draper Lewis, *Digest of Decisions, Encyclopaedia of Pennsylvania Laws*, 1754-1858, Column 2959; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, September 10, 1853.

and without imposing additional burdens in the form of taxes on them.

The newspapers of Lebanon contained editorials and letters from advocates and opponents of subscription, as in Reading, but the conflict was not as pronounced as in Reading. The issue did not take up as much space in the papers, nor were the opponents of the subscription as strong as in Reading. The proponents of the measure had many and varied claims for the taking of stock by the Borough. "Pro Bonc" said that the security the Borough would have for the payment of the interest on the subscription was the security of the individual subscriptions amounting to \$400,000 in the middle of May and the security of the whole road, estimated at \$2,000,000. He said that he had the assurance of the Directors that if \$800,000 were subscribed, the additional amount needed to complete the road had been promised by a loan of money. If this amount, \$800,000, could not be raised, the company would not make a call to the Borough, and the venture would be abandoned. Four times the amount asked from the Borough would be spent among the laboring men, mechanics, business men, and farmers. Manufacturing establishments would spring up, the population would increase, wealth would be increased, and travelers from all quarters would crowd the streets. Others claimed that Lebanon needed a railroad to keep up with the advancement of the country; the railroad was within reach for a small effort; the road would benefit the Borough more than any other place along the line; the subscription would not cost the Borough a cent, but was really a loan, yielding a profit; the road would increase the value of property fourfold; the town would expand in all directions; and there would be a greater demand for labor and a higher price offered for the same. One of the writers argued that the railroad would introduce a new system of business for the mechanics and laboring men—immediate payment in cash for wages earned. One signing his communication as "Progressive" claimed that it was not a matter of "for or against subscription," but a

matter of "Railroad or no Railroad." "L.V.S." seconded the argument of "Progressive" with the statement that it was also a matter of a railroad through Lebanon or one five miles south of Lebanon. At this time the Pinegrove, Cornwall, and Lancaster Railroad (formerly known as the Phoenixville Railroad) was being pushed in Philadelphia as a rival road to the Lebanon Valley. This route would leave Lebanon five miles to the north. It was argued that those interested in iron manufacturing would find the Phoenixville route less desirable than the valley route.

Others argued that the most important advantage to be gained from the making of the line at an early date would be the opening of the Philadelphia market, as well as those markets of the Schuylkill County mining regions, to the people of the Borough by the shortest route in both summer and winter. It was also claimed that the local people would have to take the lead in subscribing in order to induce the capitalists elsewhere to invest and lend the means of making the road. Taxes were not high at that time in comparison to the rise in wages and trade in the last twenty-five years; hence the increase in taxation resulting from municipal subscription would scarcely be noticed. The road might not pass through Lebanon if the subscription were not voted, since the Legislature at its next session might strike out the clause in the act of incorporation making Lebanon a point in the road.

Though the opponents of subscription were in the minority, they made strong efforts to defeat the measure. The "anti-subscriptionists" claimed that the Phoenixville Road would suit the interests of the people better and that they preferred that the Cornwall ore be worked up at Phoenixville rather than at Reading. It must be conceded that this argument was a valid one, for, if the Valley Road were made, the ore from Cornwall would be transported to Reading where the coal of the Schuylkill coal regions would be carried to be used in the manufacturing establishments. But the "antis" forgot that if the valley line were not con-

structed and the Phoenixville road was alone made, the iron rails would not pass through Lebanon at all unless a connection were made with the latter road by means of a lateral branch. A letter signed by "Sentinel" urged that the Phoenixville Road be aided in a similar fashion. He said that if both roads were made, the coal of the Schuylkill Valley and the ore of the Cornwall deposits might be brought together at Lebanon. Otherwise the iron ore might be carried over the Valley Road to Harrisburg and Reading to be worked up at those places since they would then have the advantage over Lebanon if the line through the Valley were alone made.⁴⁶

One writer in the *Courier* of June 17 said that some had endeavored to make "political capital" out of the election and oppose the subscription on political affiliation. The editor, in the same issue, said that although it had been argued that the Whigs in the Borough had been attempting to make a political issue out of the vote, this rumor was a false one. He argued that both Whigs and Democrats were to be found on each side of the question. Although Worth claimed that the press remained neutral, he wrote, with almost the same stroke of his pen, criticizing the proponents of the subscription for inactivity while their opponents were waxing strong to defeat the subscription.⁴⁷ Only one meeting held in Lebanon in reference to the coming election is recorded; the friends of the subscription held a meeting in the borough on the night of June 11.

The vote on the subscription in Lebanon on June 29 turned in favor of the friends of the road, with 263 votes for the subscription and 97 opposing it; a total of 360 votes as compared with the 375 votes cast in the Borough for Sheriff in October of the previous year. The reason advanced for

46. For the claims for the advantages of the Lebanon Valley Railroad over the Phoenixville Road, see the issues of *The Lebanon Courier* of May 27, June 17, and June 24, 1853.

47. Arguments for and against the subscription in Lebanon are found in the issues of *The Lebanon Courier* of May 20, May 27, June 10, June 17 and June 24, 1853 and the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of June 11, 1853.

the small vote was that it had been felt in the morning of the day of the election that the backers of subscription had things in their hands.

No further movement was made towards forwarding the enterprise in the summer of 1853 until the Supreme Court rendered its decision in September in the injunction case. Immediately after the court gave the green light to the company in this respect, additional subscriptions were obtained, including \$250,000 from the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company. A visitor to Lebanon reported that the principal topic of conversation was the Lebanon Valley Railroad and that the making of the road would be an epoch in the history of the County. "Lebanon had slept while this network of railroads has been woven over the country, and is just awakening to discover herself shorn of the trade she might command and sinking into the insignificance she merits—if she does not immediately bestir herself."⁴⁸

The Lebanon Valley had been granted the right to construct a branch road to Cornwall by the supplementary act of April, 1853. In 1850 the North Lebanon Railroad Company had been incorporated to build a railroad from the West Lebanon landings on the Union Canal to Cornwall, a distance of seven and a half miles. When the subscription books for the latter company had been opened on May 20, 1850, all the stock had been taken by the Colemans. Work on the North Lebanon was not begun, however, until construction on the Lebanon Valley was almost commenced, in order that the North Lebanon Road might be located advantageously to connect with the Lebanon Valley. With both companies authorized to build a road from Cornwall to Lebanon, a struggle between the Colemans and the Lebanon Valley might have been expected when the survey for the branch road of the Valley line was begun in the summer of 1853.

48. Letter to the editor in *The Lebanon Courier* of August 19, 1853.

In order to secure the right of way to Cornwall for their road, the directors of the Lebanon Valley deemed it advisable to construct the branch as soon as possible. As a result, Richard B. Osborne, an experienced engineer, who had been selected to take charge of the building of the Lebanon Valley, was requested to begin location of the branch road on June 10, four months before survey on the main line was to be begun. Prior to this it had been reported by the *Courier* of March 25 that construction on the North Lebanon line had been begun during that week. This, however, was only the taking of a preliminary glance at the route of the North Lebanon. Being familiar with the lay of the land, the engineer of the Valley Company combined experimental and location work by going ahead with an experienced assistant and planting flags as general guides to transitmen and the party following. Robert Coleman, one of the principal owners of the ore banks, was aroused and engaged an engineer, W. Wilson, for his assistance. Wilson began an experimental line to Cornwall, following about the same route as Osborne. At one point, however, the latter chose a sudden depression in the ridge which had to be crossed for his location. Coleman's engineer met Osborne's party a half a mile beyond, driving stakes in his line of location.

Osborne records in his notes on the affair that he "had the leveler keep with the locating party and each evening perfect the profile and establish the grade line to-date."⁴⁹ Since he was directly responsible for securing the branch road for the company, Osborne promptly laid plans and gave orders to quietly stake out the roadbed for excavating at the point of crossing of the ridge and have it ready on the second morning following. To aid this plan, Osborne drove to Reading, secured a dependable contractor, hired fifty laborers, supplied them with tools and wheelbarrows, hired wagons to transport the men and supplies, and brought them to a tavern two miles from where they were to begin work and

49. Hare, *op. cit.*

kept them there overnight. The men arrived at the point decided upon for excavation, were divided into two parties, and had a good bit of the grading done before the workers of Coleman arrived.

When no attempt was made to drive Osborne's workmen away, contracts were immediately let for the entire branch. A procession of laborers, sixty in number, was seen coming into Lebanon from Pinegrove on June 13 to work on the branch about three miles south of Lebanon. Negotiations were in progress between the North Lebanon and the Lebanon Valley in the latter part of September, 1853, to make one road to the mines. Hope that more than one road would not be built had almost been abandoned in late October. An arrangement was finally made by which the North Lebanon Road agreed to pay the whole cost of grading, land damages, etc., incurred by the Lebanon Valley during the occupation of ground between Lebanon and Cornwall. Satisfactory terms were also reached for the carrying of iron ore and other freight on the main line of the Valley Road. The chief interest of the owners of the ore banks had been one of a matter of rates on ore.

A meeting of the stockholders was held on October 5, 1853, in Reading, to appoint a committee to solicit subscriptions from the citizens of Philadelphia. At that date but \$60,000 worth of stock was needed to be subscribed to place the entire line under contract. Within a few weeks additional subscriptions of \$347,000 were obtained. It was reported in the same month that the company had succeeded in negotiating the loan of \$1,000,000 upon the condition of the stockholders along the line liberally taking stock in return for land damages. The amount of damages, estimated at \$100,000 would not be lessened or increased by such arrangement. Editor Worth claimed that the farmers benefited more by railroad improvements than any class in a community, since the iron horse not only improved the means of conveying their goods to market, but invariably increased by twenty to one hundred percent, the value of the land through which it

passed.⁵⁰ It was reported in November that many landowners along the route had agreed to take stock in lieu of land damages. With the assurance of financial assistance elsewhere, the Board of Directors ordered the first installment of five dollars on each share to be paid by November 15. John W. Killinger was to accept payment of the installment, receipt the same, and issue the proper certificates in Lebanon.

With the securing of the loan of a million dollars to make the road, Osborne was ordered to make the necessary surveys for a permanent location of the line, with the assistance of Contractor Patrick O'Reilly of Reading. These men, along with Simon Cameron, president of the road, were in Lebanon on November 3, and said that the corps of engineers was then on the road making the final location prior to letting. The party reached Womelsdorf by the last week of November and was in the neighborhood of Myerstown two weeks later. In the second week of December a new corps of engineers was organized to work upwards from Lebanon.

Osborne had begun the location of the line on October 17, having in his hands the notes of an assistant engineer, who had previously followed the original route proposed through Schaefferstown. He said that these notes were "useful to show where it should not be located," for the line planned "ran around every little rise." The route selected differed from that of Steele in that it followed the line of the Harrisburg turnpike more closely than had been anticipated. The desire seems to have been to get a line that would be as straight as possible. The line also diverged from that of Steele by bearing from Hummelstown toward Harrisburg, along Poorhouse Run and entering Harrisburg a short distance above the Pennsylvania Canal Bridge, at the foot of Second Street. The line, 53½ miles in length, had 77% of straight track and 13 miles of level road. All bridges were to be of stone, brick, or iron, except the one crossing the

50. *The Lebanon Courier*, September 23, 1853.

Schuylkill River, which was to be of a wooden super-structure, covered with a tin roof. Osborne located the main line, prepared all necessary plans for construction, including those of the structures, and completed estimates and all necessary preparations for the awarding of contracts in four and a half months. At the time of delivery of the report of Osborne it was decided that the letting of contracts would take place in the spring of 1854.⁵¹

At the election of officers of the company in Reading at Barto's Hotel, on January 9, 1854, Cameron was re-elected president. The other officers and directors were also re-elected with the exception of Robert Coleman, who was abroad at the time. G. A. Nichols, of Reading, a commissioner named in the act of April 5, 1853, was chosen by the stockholders to replace Coleman. Augustus Boas was elected director by the City Councils of Reading, as provided in the supplement of 1853. Lebanon, which had subscribed to but one thousand shares, was not entitled to elect a director. The newly elected Board met in Philadelphia on February 1, and on the 25th, to lay plans to proceed with the work of the grading and laying down of a double-track road and to arrange for the preparation of contracts and the acceptance of proposals at the engineer's office in Reading on March 14.

The *Courier* reported in the middle of February that a liberal offer had been made to the company for a transfer of charter, which would result in the pushing of the enterprise to completion within a short time.⁵² In a letter to editor Worth, which was printed in the *Courier* of February 24, 1854, General Weidman, president of the Pinegrove Railroad, announced himself as the person who had made the offer to the directors of the Valley Road to assume charge of construction. Weidman proposed to take the majority of the stock, paying to those who held it all that they had spent,

51. Hare, *op. cit.*; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, March 5 and August 19, 1854.

52. *The Lebanon Courier*, February 17, 1854.

to assume the debts contracted and unpaid, to construct the road for operation within two and a half years, and to pay to those who demanded it, a reasonable compensation for the trouble and loss of time that they had suffered. The majority of the stockholders were to sign an agreement to transfer their stock to individuals whom he would name and to bind themselves by a determined sum as damages, in case of non-compliance by themselves and compliance by the General and his friends. Weidman agreed to give security within ninety days after the signed agreement had been delivered to him to fulfill his part of the bargain. No action resulted from this offer extended by Weidman.

Just prior to the letting of contracts, it was estimated that the cost of construction would amount to over \$2,000,000 as a result of the rise in labor costs and in price of materials, and because of the decision to lay a double-track line rather than a single track.⁵³ As the time neared for the letting of contracts in Reading on March 14, the editor of the *Courier* said, that to secure construction on the cheapest and best plan, the lettings should be open to the fairest and freest competition. He also urged that the road be let in mile sections, since it would be better constructed by men who were responsible to no one.⁵⁴ This advice in regard to the length of the sections to be let was not followed, however, when the entire line was allotted on March 14 at prices lower than the estimate of the engineers. The road was divided into four divisions. The first three divisions, extending from Reading to a point near Palmyra, were let to Patrick O'Reilly of Reading. The last division to Harrisburg was contracted to George M. Lauman of the firm of Lauman, Daugherty and Company of Harrisburg, which contracted for the building of the North Central Railroad bridge over the Susquehanna above Harrisburg during the construction of the Valley Road. The office of the company in Reading at this date was over Jameson's store, at the corner of Sixth and

53. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, February 25, 1854.

54. *The Lebanon Courier*, January 20, 1854.

Penn Streets. In August of 1856 the office was moved to the second floor of John S. Pearson's new building, directly opposite from its first location.

O'Reilly retained the section of his contract east of the Schuylkill River, including the bridge crossing the river, but sub-let the remainder into mile sections. A portion of the line, embracing four miles extending through the Borough of Lebanon and for some distance on each side, was contracted to John R. McGovern, a native of County Cavan, Ireland, and a resident of Lancaster. McGovern had constructed a portion of the New York and Lake Erie Railroad with Andrew Reilly, a part of the Pennsylvania Central Railroad from Altoona to Pittsburgh with John Reilly and Bernard J. McGrann, sections of the East Penn Railroad from Allentown to Reading, the Northern Railroad in Dauphin County, the Reading and Columbia Railroad from Reading to Silver Springs, the Lancaster and Manheim Railroad, the Sunbury and Lewistown Railroad, and the Union Central Railroad in Schuylkill County, and had superintended the construction of the tunnel at Columbia. He was assisted in his work on the Valley Road by Hugh Barr of Philadelphia.⁵⁵ Work on McGovern's section was begun in Lebanon on April 10 in this same year. Patrick McAdams contracted to construct sections 34 to 39 inclusive, six miles in length, from Annville to one and one-half miles above Palmyra. This contract included Killinger's Bridge and the bridge over the Quittapahilla Creek above Annville.

Lauman retained the portion of the western division near Hummelstown, which included the bridge over the Swatara. The remainder of his division was sub-let to other contractors, chief of which was the firm of Irwin, Atherton, and Company, which built the section just below Harrisburg, including two iron bridges, one to span the road that leads close to Paxton Creek and the other over the creek itself.

55. Heisey, *op. cit.*; 64.

Work on most of the sections was underway within a short time. As mentioned before, work at Lebanon was begun on April 10. The contractors on other sections of the eastern division began work at intervals thereafter, so that by July 1 it was reported that laborers were on eleven of the thirteen sections between Reading and Womelsdorf and on several of the sections between the latter place and Lebanon. Active operations were reported to have been begun in Harrisburg by Irwin and Atherton by May 5. Prior to the time that the workmen were put on the road, the directors of the company ordered that the second and third installments of five dollars each be paid by the first day of June and the first of July, respectively. This was an indication that expenditures to build the road would soon be made on a larger scale and that increasing numbers of workmen would be employed in a short time.

In the meantime, the Legislature had passed a further supplement to the act of incorporation which permitted any railroad, whose road then connected, or would connect with the road to be constructed by the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company, to subscribe to capital stock in the Valley Road. The amounts and manner of such subscriptions were to be determined by the directors of the connecting roads as they deemed advisable. The bill was approved by Governor William Bigler on April 20, 1854.⁵⁶ With this authorization, the managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company subscribed to stock in the Lebanon Valley to \$300,000, after a lengthy consultation with the prominent stockholders of their company, in order to avail themselves of a share of the business from the north, west and south by reason of the connection at Harrisburg with other railroads.

Before long, however, the managers of the Lebanon Valley experienced trouble along the line of the road, and it was found necessary in the latter part of May to warn land-

⁵⁶. *Laws of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania, Passed at the Session of 1854*, 420-421.

holders along the line, and others interested, not to remove, deface, or otherwise damage the stakes set up by the engineers of the company, under penalty of being dealt with according to the law. This public notice was deemed necessary because of the bad conduct of a few persons in this respect.

The work of grading between Reading and the Schuylkill River, a distance of one mile, was carried forward almost at once by Contractor O'Reilly. The cutting in this part of the road was very heavy, quite an obstacle being met in the irregular nature of the ground and the deposits of limestone from twenty to thirty feet in length. It was planned to lay rails to the river in order to convey the materials to the Schuylkill for the bridge. Blasting of limestone was done after the workmen had bored to five or six feet. The company was settling land damages on liberal and satisfactory terms, with farmers receiving one dollar for each panel of fencing. Boas, director chosen by the Councils of Reading, said in his report to the Councils in the last week of June, 1854, that no difficulty had been experienced in obtaining workmen for the road and that considerable progress had also been made in the settlement of suitable locations for stations and depots.⁵⁷

The bridge across the Schuylkill above Reese's Mill was to be one of the most imposing structures in the state. The bridge, of the type known as the Howe Truss, was to have a wooden superstructure, supported from the river bed with stone arches and was to be 980 feet in length and 70 feet above the water. It was to cross the river in an oblique direction and fourteen feet higher than the bluff on the western side of the river. There were nine brick arches of thirty feet span each and four spans of iron and timber from 140 to 163 feet in length. The foundation of the abutment on the Union Canal side had been dug and the coffer dam on the same side had been commenced by the beginning of

57. *The Lebanon Courier*, May 26 and June 30, 1854.

July. Work was pushed, as time went by, until there were two hundred workmen on the bridge by September of 1855. By this same date the line from Front Street to the river had been graded and the rails laid. By the latter part of October of the same year, twelve of the thirteen piers had been founded and eight of these twelve had been built to their full height. The first span of woodwork, that crossing the canal on the eastern side of the river, had been put in by the end of the fourth week of March, 1856. No detention of boating on the canal had been found necessary during this operation. *The Lebanon Courier* of October 28, 1856, recorded that the heavy rock excavations between Third and Sixth Streets in Reading had been sufficiently completed to allow the laying of rails for a single track to the Schuylkill viaduct. The track from Sixth Street to the point of connection with the Philadelphia and Reading road near the freight depot of that company had already been laid down. The bridge crossing the river was complete with the exception of the abutment at the western end and "a few finishing touches." The laying of track across the bridge was begun a few days later.⁵⁸

One of the other bridges along the Valley Road of more than ordinary interest was the one located as Sixth Street in Reading. It consisted of three arches, two over the sidewalks and one over the roadway. Built of sandstone and brick and crossing the roadway at a forty-five degree angle in an oblique direction, the structure was known to engineers as a "skew" bridge. Its character was designated by engineers by this technical term because the courses of stone are laid in ellipsoidal curves, so that if any course of stone were completed to its ultimate end, it would form a complete elliptical. Few engineers would undertake the construction of such a difficult structure, since it required too much detail

58. Details of the construction of the bridge over the Schuylkill River are taken from the issues of *The Lebanon Courier* of July 7, 1854 and October 26, 1855 and the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of September 1, 1855, March 29, and November 22, 1856.

in plans and skillful work to complete. The large arch is composed of 230 distinct blocks of stone, each regularly cut and so formed that all stones when in place would stand firmly without any cementing material. However, mortar was put in as additional security. This bridge was the fifth of its kind in the world, the other four having been built on railroad in Great Britain and Ireland. Twenty-five to thirty men were employed on this project by September of 1855; the center arch was closed in the middle of December of that year; and the supports to the arch removed a few days after the beginning of 1856. The cost, when completed, was \$10,000.⁵⁹

An argument had arisen in the fall of 1854 between the company and the Councils of Reading over the construction of the bridge over Sixth Street. The Councils demanded that the street be allowed sixty feet in the clear, its legal width, while the company declared that it was impossible to spring an arch of that breadth but that it was willing to make it only thirty feet. The matter was to be decided at the November session of the County Court but was settled amicably without recourse to the courts. The directors of the company met on September 27 and ordered the engineer to submit a plan to the Councils. The Councils were in session at about the same time and appointed a committee to meet with the committee of the directors before the next meeting of the Councils; i. e., October 28. The two committees met and it was agreed by the representatives of the directors of the railroad that the company would build a

59. Details of the construction of the bridge at Sixth Street in Reading are from the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of August 19, October 7 and November 4, 1854, September 1, and December 15, 1855 and January 19, 1856. The *Lebanon Courier* of December 21, 1855 and February 22, 1856 and Hare, *op. cit.*

bridge of three arches across Sixth Street.⁶⁰ A plan drawn by Osborne, chief engineer, dated October 27, along with the communication of the managers on the subject, was accepted by both the Select and the Common Council on October 28.

The report of the Board of Directors of April 4, 1854, revealed that a double track for the road had been decided upon in place of a single track. The cost of construction had previously been estimated at \$1,897,738 by Osborne in a report submitted at the February meeting of the Board, along with the estimate for a double-track road which amounted to \$2,259,354. Neither estimate included land damages or equipment and machinery for the road which was to be loaned from the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company until purchase was deemed advisable. The directors reported that subscriptions to stock in the railroad then totaled \$1,035,550, of which \$785,550 had been subscribed by firms, companies, and individuals, \$200,000 by the City of Reading, and \$50,000 by the Borough of Lebanon.⁶¹

The cost of construction of the double-track line was estimated in the following manner:

Grading, masonry, and bridging	\$1,417,736
Rails (107 miles, 75 lb. rail)	669,188
Four miles of siding (52 lb. rail)	34,680
Switches, way and water stations	53,750
Contingencies and engineering	84,000

	\$2,259,354

60. There is a difference of opinion as to the exact width of the arches of the bridge at Sixth Street. Moreover, no blueprints are available. The *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of December 15, 1855 said that the center arch was 40 feet wide and the side arches were 21½ feet wide. The *Lebanon Courier* of December 21 of the same year said that the main arch was 30 feet wide and the smaller ones spanning the sidewalks were 10 feet each. Hare, in his article in *The Pilot and Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Men* of January, 1910, wrote that the central arch is 40 feet wide and the arches over the sidewalks are ten feet nine inches wide. The author measured the arches with a tape and found that the figures given by E. M. Richard, associate engineer, in a letter to the editor of *The Lebanon Courier* which was printed in the issue of February 22, 1856 of that paper, of 30 feet for the center arch and eight feet two inches for the arches for the accommodations of foot passengers to be correct.

61. *The Lebanon Courier*, August 4, 1854; *Berks and Schuylkill* August 19, 1854.

The prospective trade of the road was to consist of both local and through traffic, the carrying of ore from the Cornwall mines, conveying of limestone and coal to the ore furnaces at Lebanon and elsewhere, the transporting of pig iron to the many furnaces then in operation in Lebanon and the nine then being built at the same place and at Reading and Harrisburg, the carrying to market of the products of these furnaces, grain, flour, agricultural products, and the finished products of the valley and the carriage of through freight in both directions. The annual net profit anticipated on the road was estimated at \$306,077, in the following manner:

<i>Freight</i>	
Iron ore	\$160,000
Coal	60,000
Local freight (grain, flour, pig iron, and agricultural produce)	42,000
Through Freight	116,250
	<hr/>
	\$278,250
<i>Total Business</i>	
Passengers (local and through)	\$163,290
Freight Business	378,250
Mail and Express	15,000
	<hr/>
	\$556,540
45% deduction for working expenses	250,443
	<hr/>
Net profit	\$306,077

Soon after the delivery of this report in 1854, the directors ordered the payment of the fourth and fifth installments of five dollars each on the subscribed stock on August 21 and October 1 respectively.

Financial difficulties arising in 1854 nearly necessitated postponement of further work on the road, but Osborne persuaded the managers to reduce the working forces by fifty percent and agreed to put the corps of engineers on half-pay until full forces could again be employed. The laborers on sections 18 and 19 near Newmanstown continued working for their board with the promise that they

would be paid in full by May 15, 1855. Contractors on the line were limited to a total expenditure of twenty thousand dollars per month in October of 1854, because of the circumstances of the times. It was reported by the directors in a meeting held in Lebanon in the same month that the money market had some effect on the road but that the project was being pushed at Reading where the greater part of the heavier work had to be done. A letter to Worth, editor of *The Lebanon Courier*, in December from a resident of New-manstown commended the enterprise of the directors in pushing the work ahead toward completion when all other public improvements then on foot had been suspended since early fall.⁶² He reported that the company, however, was forced to discontinue operations until April 1st, mainly because of the severity of the weather. During the winter of 1854-55 the unemployed Irish, who had been engaged on the work until the suspension of operations, seemed to give the good people of Lebanon a good deal of trouble, for the Borough increased its number of public watchmen to six, while several private watchmen were also employed. Full forces were again employed in June of 1855, when the financial stress had abated. Much greater energy was being shown by the end of the month when Major Knupp, a contractor on the eastern division of the road near Sinking Springs, doubled his large forces.

Officers of the company elected at the annual meeting of the stockholders in Reading on January 8, 1855, were the same as had been elected in the previous year. Simon Cameron was elected to serve his third year as president of the company. A. Leize was chosen director of the company by the Councils of Reading. In the annual report of the president and managers to the stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company on January 8, 1855, it was indicated that the managers of the road had subscribed to stock in the Lebanon Valley Railroad to the amount of six

62. *The Lebanon Courier*, December 15, 1854.

thousand shares of \$300,000, of which one half had been paid.

The sixth installment on stock had been ordered by the directors of the Lebanon Valley to be paid by the first of January. Interest at the rate of one percent was to be charged on all installments due and remaining unpaid, as had been provided by the terms of the charter of the road. In April of 1855 the seventh installment of five dollars was directed to be paid by May 1st. At the same time it was reported that a loan of \$1,000,000 had been negotiated with a banking house. A bank from abroad had made application to furnish the loan, but their offer was declined since arrangements had already been partly completed with the first party. The eighth installment was ordered paid by July 1st.

When the contractors on the road had been forced to reduce their forces in the winter of 1854-55, the laborers along the route near Newmanstown and Womelsdorf were permitted to remain and have their board paid if they would wait until May 15 for wages. On March 15 wages were raised from seventy-five to eighty-five cents per day. Since the company was not in a position to start work, the contractors proposed to those men who had been working with them the previous year, but had not accepted the offer in the fall, that if they would wait for their pay until May 15, they might go to work, but not otherwise, for it would not be possible to raise money to pay them before that time. Some took this opportunity so that by April 15 there were about 150 men at work on the line. About the same time some of the workmen had an opportunity to work on the Union Canal at one dollar a day. About April 20, therefore, a number of them came to J. H. Osborne, contractor on these sections, and asked him to raise their wages to one dollar per day. He replied that he felt that he was not in a position to promise these wages, but they could go to the canal to work and return to him on May 15 when he hoped the work would progress. The workmen did not leave, but said they would work on. When Osborne returned from a

trip to Philadelphia on May first, he found that they had turned out. On the morning of May 2nd these workmen on sections 18 and 19 above Womelsdorf went to Bowen, clerk of Osborne and demanded their back wages. Osborne assured them that they would receive every cent due them on May 15, even if they did leave to work on the canal, but not before that date. This group of seventy or eighty workmen, who met their employer as he went up the line, offered an alternative, an advance of wages to one dollar a day, which was also refused. He was met by two parties at three o'clock in the afternoon who urged his acceptance of their demands unless he wished to see all men and horses stop work. On their way to meet their employer they had compelled all workmen engaged along the way and at the quarry, supplying stone to the road, to cease work. In two instances bosses had been assaulted without injury when they had resisted. When Wane, one of the foremen, was assaulted on the same day, warrants were sworn out for the arrest of four of the laborers.

On Thursday, May 3rd, about one hundred and fifty to two hundred of the workmen, largely Irish, came into Womelsdorf and repeated their demand, which was again refused. The striking Irish, many of whom were armed, refused to allow the horses to be fed or watered, forbade the teamsters to take out the teams at the risk of their lives, and forbade others to work in their stead. On the same day, Constable Lyons, of Womelsdorf, attempted to arrest the four men for whom the warrants had been sworn, but could not receive any help from the townspeople, and the workmen were allowed to escape. That night after ten o'clock, a large stable belonging to Tarrant & Company, contractors on section 16 near Newmanstown, containing nine mules and three horses, three tons of hay, a large quantity of grain and feed, and two dozen sets of harness was set afire. Some of the German neighbors broke open a stable door and saved some oats, corn and some harness which was in the feed house. Three mules broke out, two of them being severely burned,

but the remainder of the mules, along with the horses, perished. The three tons of hay and grain consumed in the flames was valued at five hundred dollars. About forty to fifty men stood about the burning stable but did not make the slightest move to save anything.

On Friday morning a formal requisition was made by the contractor upon the High Sheriff of Berks County, John Manderback, for "material aid." At two o'clock in the afternoon, three military companies of Reading, the Ringgold Artillery with seventy-five men, the Reading Artillery with thirty men, and the Reading Rifles with thirty men, all under command of General William H. Keim, accompanied by citizens numbering about two hundred men, set out from Reading to march to Womelsdorf. No opposition was met at that place, and the party set up a camp for the duration of hostilities. In the evening the constable, along with his deputies and assistants and the civil posse, but without the assistance of the military, proceeded along the line of the railroad to Newmanstown, seven miles distant, and arrested thirty-three or thirty-six men and boys. They were taken to Womelsdorf, some in chains, where they were examined late in the evening by J. M. Stephens, Justice of the Peace. Twelve were committed to the local lock-up for the night. During the night two of the ringleaders escaped from the jail.

On Saturday morning those who had been arrested and incarcerated for the night were escorted to Reading by the military companies, *the sheriff*, and *the posse*, departing from the scene of the disturbance at about eight o'clock. While marching through Reading the prisoners were inclosed in a hollow square of bristling bayonets. The whole episode of the capture and march through Reading became the subject of a parody on Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade," by a local wit, which was entitled, "The Charge of the Sheriff's Aid."

"CHARGE OF THE SHERIFF'S AID"

Fourteen miles, fourteen miles,
Fourteen miles onward,
All on the turnpike road
Marched the One Hundred

For on the town with hasty dash,
Had come a rider and moustache,
And message, which soon raised a fuss,—
"The Irish, all, are in a muss:
They've burned six mules, two horses;
Six Hundred armed with pick and spade,
Have sworn the Railroad shan't be made,
And all the line is strewn with corpses.
We want the 'posse comitatis,'
And troops too, or they'll soon be at us,
And Womelsdorf be laid in ashes!
Wake up ye soldier brave and tall!
Come out, know-nothings, one and all!
Don't let these bloody Papists smash us."
These words—and off he thundered,
No time to lose—creation quakes,
Ye heroes 'hurry up the cakes,'
Arm, arm,—One Hundred.

Then flew the quick alarm,
Over the city;
Look out for blood and harm,
Get ready for pity;
All the belles of 'Vera Cruz'
Trembled in their very shoes,
What ties were sundered!
Many gallant 'lovers' were
'Mongst the One Hundred.

"All flesh is grass," they said.
"Our beaux will be eaten;
'Grass' widows we shall be,
If they are beaten.
Sad indeed will be their fate,
Hungry stomachs, broken pates,
Wounds, and pockets plundered;
Bring pretzels and bandages for
The gallant One Hundred."

"Forward," the Sheriff said,
(Bully Lyons for his aid.)
No man was then dismayed,
But crying 'who's afraid,'
Onward they blundered,
Ready to do or die,
Fight or know the reason why,
To their friends bid good-bye,
And to the Valley Road
Marched the One Hundred.

Cannon in front of them.
Stragglers in the rear of them
Drums in the midst of them
Rattled and thundered;
Krick's surrendered with a look,
Fort Mosser next they took.
Fort Binkley's bottles shook—
Then into Womelsdorf,
Hoofs clatt'ring on the turf,
Marched the One Hundred.

Folks to the right of them,
Folks to the left of them,
Folks all around them,
Look curious, and wondered
What the deuce brought them there,
With such a gallant air,
Bayonets fixed—sabres bare,
Warlike One Hundred.

No enemy in sight,
Bivouaced they for the night,
While eyes of ladies bright,
Admired and wondered;
Thus, then, the bellicose,
Failing to find their foes,
Sought rest in sweet repose,
Tired One Hundred.

Meanwhile the Sheriff, then
With a few chosen men,
(Bully Lyons counted ten,)
Onward marched up to the glen,
Where they surrounded,

Captured and took the foe,
Ere they could strike a blow,
Brought them along in tow,
Not a man wounded!

Now see the Irishmen,
Safely locked in a pen,
Shillehals all grounded, then,
Thirty-six they numbered;
Then came the Justice's court,
Pat thought it only sport,
Outsiders wondered;
For at the inner door,
Stood guard—brave soldiers four,
Of the One Hundred.

Twelve men were soon picked out,
Dressed *a la* Richard Doot,
They thought their days numbered;
But when the morning broke,
And the night guard awoke,
Two had cut sticks and sloped,—
Right from the midst of the
Gallant One Hundred!
Up at the break of day,
Up and in war's array,
Up and once more away
Marched the One Hundred;
Formed they in hollow square,
Pris'ners they put in there—
Gave them in Tyson's care,
Glorious One Hundred!

Great was the *charge* they made,
Now *charge*—the county
Well earned the Sheriffs aid.
Pensions and Land Bounty.
"When can their glory fade,
O the bold charge they made,
All the world wondered;
Honor the charge *they* made,
Honor the Sheriff's aid,
Noble One Hundred."

—Berks and Schuylkill Journal, May 12, 1855.

Upon arrival in Reading the ringleaders were committed to the county prison for trial. The Irishmen were brought before Judge Jones, of Reading, for a hearing on a writ of "Habeas Corpus" on May 19. The prosecution was directed by District Attorney Hagenman and Attorney Richards; while the defendants were represented by lawyers Young and Swartz. One of those arrested, James Stewart, was set free when the evidence against him was not sufficient for his detention. The other nine rioters were returned to prison in fault of bail to await trial at the next Quarter Sessions in August, to answer charges of riot and conspiracy.⁶³ The author regrets that in his research work on the affair he was unable to determine what happened to the Irishmen, for the newspapers of the day carried no account of a trial or release of the men, and no such trial is recorded in the books of the Clerk of Quarter Sessions of Berks County.

Leize, Director representing the City of Reading on the Board in 1855, reported to the Councils in May that 17,750 shares, amounting to \$887,500, exclusive of those taken by the City of Reading, the Borough of Lebanon, and the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, had been subscribed by 254 stockholders. Payments of six installments on this stock, which had been due up to May 1, had amounted to \$532,650. Of this amount, \$491,946.60 had been paid by the subscribers. Besides the \$40,704.40 outstanding on this portion of the stock, \$20,000 was due from the City of

63. Information on the "Irish Riot" at Womelsdorf is taken from the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of May 5, May 12, and May 26, 1855; *The Lebanon Courier*, May 12, 1855; *Reading Gazette and Democrat*, May 19, and May 26, 1855; Rev. P. C. Croll, *Annals of Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania and the Tulpehocken Community, 1723-1923*, 26; and Montgomery, *op. cit.*; 458. Symptoms of another outbreak among the Irish workmen, this time on section 14 just above Womelsdorf, were seen in the first week of September of 1855. On this occasion the cause was the alleged oppression of the superintendent of the work. Some of the workmen had gone to the farmers and storekeepers of the vicinity and warned them to have no dealings with the officer but to join them in demanding his dismissal, under the threat of having their barns and homes destroyed. A meeting was held by the workmen to consider their grievances but the matter was settled amicably.

Reading and \$5,000 from the Borough of Lebanon.⁶⁴ The ninth and tenth installments of five dollars each were ordered to be paid by September 1 and November 1 of 1855. The heavy expenditures on the road in August of that year compelled the company to collect all outstanding dues which were not paid before September 1. The Councils of Reading had resolved at their meetings on September 24, 1853, to have one member of the Select Council and two members of the Common Council appointed to meet with the managers of the Lebanon Valley to determine in what denominations the bonds of the city to cover the subscription were to be issued. In all, city bonds to the amount of \$200,000 were issued in payment of the four thousand shares subscribed by the Councils of Reading. The councils resolved in July of 1855 that the Mayor and the Presidents of the Councils issue bonds for the sixth, seventh, and eighth installments due on the stock. The last issuance, for the ninth and tenth installments, was reported to the councils by the Mayor and the president on August 25, 1855.

The two most important bridges on the portion of the road in Lebanon County were those over Killinger's Run and the Quittapahilla Creek, both of which were on the sections contracted by McAdams (sections 34 to 39, inclusive), beginning at Annville and extending to a mile and a half above Palmyra, a distance of six miles. The bridge at Killinger's Run, located a mile above the Quittapahilla Bridge, was 140 feet long and had an eighteen foot arch. Cost of the bridge, which was designed by E. M. Richards, engineer of the third division of the road, was not to exceed sixty dollars per lineal foot. The bridge over the Quittapahilla Creek, just west of Annville, had two arches, one of forty feet and the other of twelve feet. Stones were used in the construction of this latter bridge were taken from a quarry in the immediate vicinity.

64. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, June 2, 1855.

The bridges of note on the portion of the road in Dauphin County were those over Swatara Creek and Beaver Creek. The latter was 130 feet in length. The bridge over the Swatara, just west of Hummelstown, undoubtedly the finest structure on the line, was of stone with six brick arches of seventy feet each, rising forty-three feet above the water and being six hundred feet in length. Edward J. Lauman, contractor on the section including the bridge, had at first planned to build a bridge with three spans of 175 feet each, but changed his plans before work was begun. Brick used in these two bridges were made in Lauman's Brick Yard, a few hundred feet south of the Swatara bridge.

By September 1, 1855, McGovern had completed his contract through Lebanon, and McAdams reported that he could finish his work in three months, there being comparatively little to be done to make his six miles ready for ballast, except some quite heavy cuts remaining to be made. One of these cuts, extending through sections 35 and 36, was a mile in length and ranged from ten to thirteen feet in depth, through almost solid rock. Lauman said at this time that the work on his portion was some of the heaviest on the line, being chiefly rock cutting. At mid-September the grading on the road had progressed so far that O'Reilly advertised that proposals for the supplying of sills for the track would be received. O'Reilly specified that the sills were to be of white oak, pin oak, or chestnut, hewn or sawed on two sides. One-half of the number to be supplied were to be not less than eight inches by seven inches thick and nine feet long; one-third of them were to be six inches by seven inches thick and nine feet long; and the remaining one-sixth were to be six inches by six inches thick and nine feet long. Proposals in Lebanon were to be left with John W. Killinger.

A letter to the editor of *The Lebanon Courier* in October of 1855 revealed that there were one thousand men employed on the road at that time, that the forces on the eastern division had been ordered increased by fifty per cent. by the directors in order to complete the line from Reading to Lebanon and to

have it in running order by the end of another year, that \$700,000 had already been spent on construction, land damages, and purchase of iron, that one-third of the excavation had been finished, and that two and a half million cubic yards were yet to be removed. The road passed through the land of about ninety individuals in Lebanon County.⁶⁵

To insure completion of the road by the spring of 1858, the directors of the Lebanon Valley proposed to issue bonds to the amount of \$1,500,000, offering a mortgage on the works as security. The payment of the bonds was to be provided for by a sinking fund of fifty thousand dollars a year. Assuming that the legislative authority for this purpose could be secured, the directors of the Lebanon Valley applied to the managers of the Philadelphia and Reading to undertake the payment of the sinking fund, believing that with such a guarantee the bonds could be disposed of promptly on exceedingly favorable terms. This proposition was submitted by the directors of the Philadelphia and Reading to the stockholders of the company at the annual meeting in Philadelphia on January 14, 1856. The directors requested that the company be permitted to issue stock at par for each amount of the sinking fund required to be paid. This suggestion was approved by the stockholders in their meeting on the same day. The managers were also authorized to enter into any arrangements or contracts they might deem expedient for the operating of the line of the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company. The results of such action will be seen later.⁶⁶

In the election of officers and managers of the Lebanon Valley in Reading on January 14, 1856, the only change was the choice of Daniel S. Hunter to replace H. H. Muhlenberg as secretary and treasurer of the company. Samuel Freas was chosen as director to represent the City Councils of Reading on the Board of Managers.

65. *The Lebanon Courier*, October 26, 1855.

66. *Annual Reports of the Presidents and Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company to the Stockholders, 1856 to 1869.*

The monthly expenditures on the line in the summer of 1855 had equalled \$60,000. This amount had risen to nearly \$100,000 by December with the rapid progress of construction, but work was partially suspended in the latter part of December and in January of 1856 because of the severity of the weather. Consequently, the amount paid to contractors on the road on the fifteenth of January for the work done in December totalled but ninety thousand dollars. The amount paid on February 12 for the construction done in January had fallen to seventy thousand dollars. Operations had been greatly retarded by the intense cold until well into February. As soon as the weather broke, however, the work was resumed with renewed vigor.

On January 1, 1856, John Killinger, Senator from Lebanon County, introduced a supplement to the act of incorporation in the Senate which authorized the company to borrow money and increased the capital stock. It was passed on the same day on first reading, was approved two days later on the third, and was read in the House on January 16. Here an amendment was added which placed a tax of three mills per ton per mile on freight, and the supplement passed fifty-eight to twenty-nine. When the bill came up in the Senate on the thirtieth, the amendment imposing the tax was struck from the measure after Killinger had spoken for the bill without the tax. He said that the railroad was not asking to be relieved of payment of the tax nor was it questioning the right of the Commonwealth to tax, but was merely asking for the authority to borrow money; that this was not the time for the Legislature to use the right reserved by statute to tax the road; that if the loan were not negotiated, the work, then half completed, would have to be abandoned; and that the tax was not applicable to this bill. On motion of Senator Eli K. Price, representing the City of Philadelphia, an amendment was adopted, reserving the right to the State to impose a tax thereafter. On February 1, the House concurred on the amendment and several others added in the

Senate by a vote of 68 to 23. The bill was signed by Governor James Pollock on February 4.

The capital stock of the company was increased by the supplement from thirty thousand to fifty thousand shares. The directors were authorized to borrow money necessary for the completion and equipping of the road, not exceeding \$1,000,000 and to issue bonds, secured by a first mortgage upon the road, which were to be for not less than \$1,000. The company was also prohibited from extending its road northward or westward from Harrisburg by a branch road. The other section of the act had to do with the reconstruction of turāpikes, streets, and lanes, the sites of which were found necessary to be changed.⁶⁷

The report of President Cameron of May, 1856, indicated that there were 1172 laborers, 186 mechanics, and 419 horses employed on the line. The mason work at this date was nearly all completed except that of the Swatara and Schuylkill bridges, which were expected to be completed during the year. It was anticipated that the road would be in operation for the full length of the line on May 1, 1857. Masonry and grading on the several divisions had been completed as follows:

First Division—13½ miles—masonry, 66%, grading, 88% complete;
 Second Division—12¾ miles—masonry, 71%, grading, 59% complete;
 Third Division—14 miles—masonry, 65%, grading, 55% complete;
 Fourth Division—13 miles—masonry, 25%, grading, 65% complete.

Laying of track was to begin on June 1 and to continue at the rate of six miles a month. This would mean that seven hundred tons of iron per month would have to be delivered to finish the road by May 1, 1857.

Expenditures had been made as follows:

Construction	\$1,096,119.00
Land Damages	102,727.66
Engineering	63,155.06
Iron Rails	45,118.62
Real Estate	8,970.18
Sundries	34,211.41
	~~~~~
	\$1,350,301.93

67. *Laws of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania. Passed at the Session of 1856, 17.*

The entire cost of the road was estimated at \$2,500,000. To meet this sum subscriptions amounting to \$1,055,550 had been obtained. It was proposed to issue bonds at 7% interest for a million and a half dollars. Security for the loan was a first mortgage on the road. The company proposed a sinking fund of \$50,000 a year for 30 years to liquidate the debt. The Reading Railroad Company had guaranteed the payment of this sinking fund and to accept, in lieu thereof, stock of the Valley Road at par.⁶⁸

The work on the eastern portion of the road was completed and ready for sills by the middle of 1856. The editor of *The Lebanon Courier* took a trip over the line east to Newmans-town in August and reported that much of the heavy work on that part was yet to be done. that the number of hands on the force would have to be increased to complete the line by the next year. He also said that the rails were laid at several points and cars were in use to convey dirt from one place to another. He declared, however, that a mistake had been made in not letting the road by mile sections as he had advocated in March of 1854.⁶⁹

Two reports in the early part of August indicated that the road was slowly but surely being made and would soon be in operation. The first report was of the completion of the contract of McGovern, in and around the Borough of Lebanon. The second was the bringing of word by steamer that a loan of \$1,500,000 had been negotiated in London. This loan would enable the company to complete the work without further delay. It was seen that the price of the stock of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company had been advanced in the New York market as a direct result of the securing of the loan, inasmuch as the Lebanon Valley was regarded as a very valuable feeder to the Reading Road.

When the time for the fall elections in Reading approached in 1856, it was feared that the Whig Party might receive a

68. *The Lebanon Courier*, June 20, 1856.

69. *The Lebanon Courier*, August 15, 1856.



defeat at the polls, since there were 2,500 men, principally Irish Catholics, engaged on the line of the Lebanon Valley and on the Union Canal between Reading and the Lebanon County line, the greater number of whom would be required to vote the Democratic ballot or "Dimmicratic Ticket" as Getz, editor of the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, preferred to call it. Many of these workmen would doubtlessly attempt to vote on forged or borrowed naturalization papers. The populace were admonished to guard the ballot boxes with watchful eyes on the day of the election.⁷⁰

The laying of track in the vicinity of Lebanon was begun in the beginning of December, 1856, with the hope that the time for railroad communications with Philadelphia would be some time between March and May of the following year. By the end of December a considerable portion of the track was laid from Lebanon eastward, and it was reported that the boys of the Borough were not disposed to "wait for the locomotive" but went riding with their own power applied to the freight cars then in use on the road in the hauling of dirt. In Reading the heavy rock excavation between Third and Sixth Streets had been sufficiently completed to allow the laying down of rails for a single track to the Schuylkill viaduct, the rails having already been laid from the connection with the Philadelphia and Reading, near the freight depot, to Sixth Street. The bridge had been completed with the exception of the abutment at the western end and a few finishing touches and was to be ready for the laying of track in a few days. On the western side of the river, the road, for the most part, was graded to Womelsdorf and many sections of the rails had been put down. It was believed that a single track to Womelsdorf would be ready for cars by January 1. By the end of 1856 five miles of track had been laid, and 35 miles had been entirely graded.

In their annual report to the stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad in January, 1857, the president

70. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, October 4, 1856.

and managers reported that more funds would be required to complete the road and that further assistance had been asked of the Philadelphia and Reading. The managers recommended further advances for its completion on such terms and conditions as would best secure and promote the interests of their company, in view of the large amount already invested and the importance of making the Lebanon Valley Road productive as soon as possible. The managers also indicated that it was desirable that the roads be worked jointly for the mutual benefit of both companies and that it would be necessary to make arrangements, by lease or otherwise, prior to the opening of the Valley Road, for conducting the business in such a manner as would be most beneficial to both. The suggestions of the managers were accepted by the stockholders of the company, and the managers were ordered to make arrangements and contracts thought necessary for the working of the Lebanon Valley Railroad and to make loans to the latter company as would be the most advantageous to the interests of their road.⁷¹

In the election of officers and directors of the Lebanon Valley on January 12, 1857, at Reading, there was but one change in the membership of the board. G. Dawson Coleman was elected in place of William Strong, who declined a re-election. John Henry was chosen director to represent the Councils of Reading for the year 1857.

By January first of the new year the main portion of the road between Reading and Womelsdorf had been laid, as well as a considerable portion of it between Womelsdorf and Lebanon. A connection between the Lebanon Valley and the Philadelphia and Reading was made on the first of January at the Y opposite the freight depot at Reading. The bridge over the Schuylkill, though nearly completed, was not quite ready for the passage of cars as had been expected in the fall. On the second of January the locomotive "Erie" passed up the road from Reading as far as the viaduct. A

71. *Annual Reports of the Presidents and Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company to the Stockholders, 1856 to 1869.*

single track of heavy T rail was laid across the bridge in a few days over which trains of cars loaded with sills, rails; and other materials passed almost at once. Cars were run up the road about three miles to the first crossing of the Harrisburg turnpike by the middle of January.

Since it had been found advisable by the managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad to make better arrangements for the conducting of the business of their company and the Lebanon Valley, legal authorization to assist the managers was sought from the State Legislature in February, 1857. On the third of the month, John W. Killinger, Senator representing Lebanon Valley and chairman of the Committee of Railroads, introduced a bill in the Senate to consolidate the Lebanon Valley and the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Companies, which was passed later in the month. Meanwhile a similar bill was favorably reported in the House on February 5, and was placed in the hands of the Committee on Corporations in the House, which committee amended the bill in two particulars. Merchandise carried over the road was to be taxed at the same rate as the freight carried by the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad. The majority of the directors, as well as the president of the road, were to be citizens of the United States. Killinger called up the bill in the Senate for concurrence on March 25, and quite a heated discussion ensued in relation to the tax on the tonnage. An attempt to place a tax of three mills per ton per mile was defeated, and the bill was sent to the other branch without it. Killinger also presented a petition from the Mayor and Councils of Reading asking that the bill would provide for the assumption of the municipal subscription.

The bill passed first reading in the House on April 25 and was taken up for second reading on April 28, at which time the proviso formerly added by the House, requiring that the president and the majority of the directors be citizens of the United States, was struck from the measure by a fifty-three to twenty-five vote. This amendment had been



considered by many as a direct blow at Richard D. Cullen, President of the Philadelphia and Reading, who was a citizen of Great Britain. This was to be the most disputed and most travelled bill passed by the Legislature in relation to the Valley Railroad, for it was again amended in the House, so that the act was not to take effect until provision was made for redemption at par of the shares of stock held by Reading and Lebanon. Quite a bit of discussion, led by J. Lawrence Getz, Speaker of the House and editor of the *Reading Gazette and Democrat*, took place on this last amendment which was added to the bill by a sixty-two to nineteen vote on the same day. When the bill was reintroduced in the Senate, that body struck out the section added by the House pertaining to the redemption of stock on motion of Killinger. However, since the terms of consolidation were to be determined by the directors of the two roads, it was believed that the redemption of the stock would be accomplished, for the majority of the directors of the Lebanon Valley Company were citizens of Reading and Lebanon. The House concurred on the change, and the bill was signed by Governor James Pollock on the fifth of May.

The act provided that the two railroad companies were to be consolidated into one and that all property, rights, privileges, and franchises of the Lebanon Valley were to be transferred to the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. The managers of the companies were authorized to make a joint agreement for consolidation and merger which was to prescribe the terms, conditions, and manner of converting stock of the Lebanon Valley into stock of the Philadelphia and Reading. This agreement was to be submitted to the stockholders of each company separately and, if the vote was in favor of merger, the secretaries of the companies were to certify the same and file a copy of the agreement with the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Consolidation was to be considered in effect upon the filing of the certificate and the copy of the agreement. A certified copy of the proceedings of the meetings of the stockholders with a copy of the agree-

ment attached was to be recorded in the offices of the Recorders of Deeds in Philadelphia, Berks, Lebanon and Dauphin Counties.⁷²

Meanwhile work on the road had been progressing very favorably, and a locomotive for the road was brought up via the Union Canal and placed on the track in the vicinity of the "Narrows" on April 21, from whence it was run up to Lebanon on the following day. The permanent connection between the Lebanon Valley and Reading Railroads was made in the third week of May, 1857, at Reading, about fifty feet above the Walnut Street bridge. The first passenger car, containing the presidents of both roads, G. A. Nicolls, superintendent of the Philadelphia and Reading, and others, was run as far as Wernersville on May 21. That the merchants along the line took advantage of the convenience of the railroad almost immediately, can be seen from the report of the *Courier* of June 5, which said that several loads of goods had been transported to Messrs. R. and F. S. Ludwig, merchants at Wernersville, in the last week of May, and that H. P. Robson and Company, two miles farther along the line at the present site of Robesonia, were obtaining their supplies of coal for their furnaces direct from the mines of the Schuylkill Valley.

The *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of June 6 reported that the grading between Lebanon and Reading was all completed except for some slight cutting and filling on section 18. A single track had been laid from Reading westward to within a mile of Womelsdorf and from Lebanon eastward to Newsmanstown. Hence, about five miles of track were yet to be laid to connect Lebanon and Reading by rail. Work on the laying of track had to wait for the completion of grading so that it was only by the end of the third week of June that the road was completed as far as Womelsdorf. On some sections west of Lebanon there was still considerable rock excavation and embankment work to be done, particularly on

72. *Laws of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania, Passed at the Session of 1857*, 401-403.

the first two sections east of Harrisburg. The bridge over the Swatara was up and the arches sprung, but the covering or roadway had not yet been laid down.

The whole region between the Quittaphilla Creek and the Lebanon Valley Railroad in the Borough of Lebanon was said by Rev. Theodore E. Schmauk to have been one great hollow prior to the time that work was begun on the road. He also said that it required a great amount of grading in Lebanon to get the present level of the street and railroad, since the ground had formerly sloped considerably from the elevation north of the railroad line, known as Oxenberg, toward the Quittaphilla. This grading was done by John Mellinger and a force of ten men under him who cut down an embankment of eight to nine feet.⁷³ Construction of buildings for accommodation of business at Lebanon had been begun by contractors Longnecker and Gabel in the middle of August, 1856. The passenger house, a frame structure, "painted and sanded," located at the southeast corner of Walnut Street and fronting on the railroad, was sixty-six feet by thirty-three feet and was surrounded by a platform. It was provided with all the necessary conveniences for a ticket office, telegraph office, reception rooms, etc. The freight station, also a frame building, located on the southwest corner of Pinegrove Street and fronting on the railroad, was 100 feet by 50 feet with double track and all conveniences. Lewis Kirk of Reading constructed the engine used to raise water to supply the demands at the depot.

The effect of the building of the road upon the price of real estate near the station at Lebanon can be seen in the transfer of land just north of the tracks in 1856 and 1857. In October of 1856 Weimer bought three and one-half acres of land north of the railroad depots, then in process of construction, for six thousand dollars. Late in the same month

73. Rev. Theodore Schmauk, Address delivered in the Lebanon High School, February 21, 1913; typewritten copy in his folio; Theodore E. Schmauk, "The History of Lebanon Prior to 1876" in *Papers Read Before the Lebanon County Historical Society*, Vol. No. 7; 242.



Weimer began erection of a foundry and machine shops to manufacture cars on a large scale, the main building of which establishment was to be 40 by 170 feet. In March of 1857 Weimer received \$2,500 for only three-quarters of an acre of his lot from Charles W. Kuhnle, who built a hotel, the Lebanon Valley House, in that year.⁷⁴

The stations erected at Womelsdorf and Stouchsburg in 1856 were placed about a mile from these towns, since it was expected that a cluster of houses, storage houses, and landings would be built at these depots and that these groups of buildings would in time connect with the main portions of these towns. A passenger station and freight depot were erected at Myerstown in 1857 after the same plan as the plans used in Lebanon.

When it appeared in June of 1857 that the line would be opened to Lebanon about July first, a number of appointments were made by the company. G. A. Nicolls, superintendent of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, was chosen to act in the same capacity on the Lebanon Valley. William H. Strickland, passenger agent on the Philadelphia and Reading, was selected as assistant superintendent, and Mr. Clarke of Reading was chosen conductor on the road. John H. Sell was appointed baggage and freight agent at Womelsdorf. Judge Deppen was chosen freight and ticket agent at Myerstown, and William M. Missimer at Missimer's Station. In Lebanon Mr. McAbee received the appointment as dispatcher, and Conrad Mark was appointed ticket and freight agent, with John A. Shertzer as his assistant. A year later, June, 1858, Mark was chosen as a teller in the Lebanon Bank and was succeeded by Harry J. Shertzer, who resigned the position in December because of ill health. Charles Killinger was appointed to fill the vacancy at that time.⁷⁵

74. *The Lebanon Courier*, October 3, October 24, 1856, March 6, 1857; Theodore E. Schmauk, "The History of Eighth Street," 242.

75. *The Lebanon Courier*, June 26, and July 3, 1857, June 11, and December 16, 1858; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, July 4, 1857.

The first through trip by rail from Reading to Lebanon was made on June 30, 1857. The locomotive on this first run, the "New England," was driven by the division engineer, Edward Muhlenberg. A special trip was arranged for the following day. A small passenger car was attached to a locomotive and sent out from Reading in the morning, stopping at all stations along the line to pick up freight and passengers. In the afternoon the train was run to Cornwall for a visit to the ore hills by the officers of both the Lebanon Valley and the Philadelphia and Reading Railroads, who had made the trip to Lebanon. The return from Lebanon to Reading in the late afternoon was made in one hour and fifteen minutes running time. The officers of the road and a few of their friends from Lebanon and Reading met in the woods of Major Sheetz near Womelsdorf on Saturday, July 4, preparatory to the regular running of cars on the road, to "celebrate our independence from Great Britain and Turnpikes." The trip from Lebanon to Womelsdorf was made according to Editor Worth, in 50 minutes, "despite the imperfect state of the road and the numerous stoppages." This was evidently considered a good running time between such points in those days, taking everything into consideration. Judge Gordon of Reading presided at the celebration, and remarks were made by G. A. Nicolls and John W. Killinger.⁷⁶

During the following week a freight train with a passenger car attached ran between Reading and Lebanon, arriving at Lebanon at 11:30 A.M. and departing at 1:00 P.M. As many as forty and fifty passengers passed up and down the road each day. The regular passenger and freight trains began to run between these two points on Monday, July 13. At first it had been decided to run two freight trains daily, but prior to the beginning of the regular schedule it was announced that only one freight train would be run a day. The passenger train left Reading daily, except Sundays, at

76. *The Lebanon Courier*, July 10, 1857.

10:30 A.M., stopping at Sinking Springs, Wernersville, Robesonia, Womelsdorf, Millbach and Myerstown before arriving at Lebanon at 12:10 P.M. The eastbound train left Lebanon at half past three, stopped at the same stations, and arrived at Reading at 5:10 P.M., connecting with the 5:36 P.M. train to Philadelphia and the 6:10 train to Pottsville. The first class fare from Lebanon to Reading was eight-five cents, and the second class fare amounted to seventy cents. First class fare was charged for travel by the regular passenger trains and second class fare for travel by passenger coaches attached to freight trains. The freight train left Reading at six o'clock in the morning and began the return trip from Lebanon at six o'clock in the evening. The trains kept to the time-table to the minute as the regular runs were begun. It was reported that the first up-train carried 140 passengers and as many or more were said to have been on the down-train and that the amount taken in passenger fares in the first week totaled six hundred dollars. The engines and cars required for the carrying of passengers and freight were furnished by the Philadelphia and Reading Road, charging the Lebanon Valley for the full value of their service.⁷⁷

In August the company began to run two passenger and two freight trains between Reading and Lebanon, the down-trains with three passenger cars, none of which were second class, leaving Lebanon at seven o'clock in the morning and at 2:15 in the afternoon. The morning train arrived in Reading in time to connect with the morning train to Philadelphia. The freight trains which left Reading in the late morning and early evening had a passenger car attached. All passengers were admonished to purchase their tickets before the trains started from the stations. In the early part of September the time for the departure of the passenger trains was changed slightly, presumably to give those per-

77. *Annual Reports of the Presidents and Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company to the Stockholders, 1856 to 1869.*



sons having business to transact in Lebanon more time than previously in order that it might not be necessary for them to remain there overnight. The fall and winter arrangements announced in late October indicated that but one passenger train and one freight train would be run between the two points. Arrangements were also announced for the running of stages from Lebanon to Harrisburg, Jonestown, and Schaefferstown connecting with these trains. The fare from Reading to Harrisburg by use of the train and stage amounted to \$1.50.

The people of Berks and Lebanon Counties availed themselves of the use of the newly opened line almost at once for a series of affairs held annually in the summer and fall. A large outing or "Grand Picnic" was held in Manderbach's Springs near the Womelsdorf station on July 16. Two hundred persons from Reading, accompanied by the "Ringgold Cornet" and Smith and Wittich's Quadrille Bands set out from the eastern terminus of the line at 9:30 in the morning in four passenger cars. A train leaving Lebanon with fifty to seventy-five persons aboard met the Reading train and a procession was formed and moved off to enjoy the day in a shady grove. In October the company sold excursion tickets to Reading for use from the seventh to the tenth, during which days the Berks County Agricultural Exhibition or Berks County Fair was held in Reading. Round trip tickets were sold for \$1.20 as compared with the usual fare of \$1.70 first class and \$1.40 second class. It was reported that the company had ten cars on the train on the seventh, but even that number of cars was insufficient to handle the large crowd desiring to avail themselves of the novelty of a train ride to the fair, for hundreds were unable to be taken aboard. On the ninth 16 large cars, densely packed, carried not less than twelve hundred persons from Lebanon to visit the fair. The military companies of the Reading Volunteer Battalion elected to make the trip to Sinking Springs, the place selected for their annual Fall Parade on October 17, by a special train leaving Reading at 9:00 A.M.

Meanwhile construction on the western division of the road, from Lebanon to Harrisburg, was being pushed to have the entire line opened for traffic by the beginning of the year. By October 1, the rails had been laid westward from Lebanon to within six miles of Hummelstown and it was expected that trains would be running to the latter place by the end of the month, leaving but nine miles to be completed to put Lebanon in direct communication with Harrisburg by rail. Upon this section west of Hummelstown there was still some heavy work to be done. However, the hope that the rails would be laid to Hummelstown by the end of October was to be short-lived, for the company was compelled to suspend operations in the middle of the month due to "the pressure of the times." Irwin, contractor on the section adjoining Harrisburg, and Colder and DeHaven, contractors for the erection of a new channel for the Pennsylvania Canal in Harrisburg, which had been found necessary so that the Lebanon Valley might have adequate facilities at the western terminus, jointly discharged 550 laborers and mechanics on the nineteenth. The board of managers met two days later in Hummelstown, however, and made arrangements for the completing of the road to Harrisburg by the first of the year.

The trains began running to Hummelstown on the thirteenth of November, 1857, arriving at that point about one o'clock in the afternoon and departing at 2:30 P.M. Residents of Hummelstown assembled along the line of the track from Hanover Street to Railroad Street, and a group of citizens, headed by Dr. Staley, acted as a reception committee to the railroad officials aboard the first train into the town. The fares from Lebanon to Hummelstown were fifty and forty cents. The stages running from the new point on the line to Harrisburg for the accommodation of passengers at a charge of fifty cents, were said to be daily crowded a week after the road was open to Hummelstown. On December 10 the morning train was unable to arrive at Hummelstown until it was too late to return to Reading at the regular time. The detention was caused by a large rock falling upon the track

and breaking the rails near Missimer's Station, heavy rains having washed away the earth.

Late in October one of the heaviest contractors on that portion of the line to be completed was reported to have said that the directors had found themselves unable to carry out arrangements satisfactory to the contractors to complete the road to Harrisburg by the first of the year.⁷⁸ The General Superintendent, G. A. Nicolls, declared in the second week of November, however, that arrangements had been made to continue the work on the section from Hummelstown to Harrisburg without further interruption. But these contractors continued to delay their work and finally suspended operations about the time of the opening of the road to Hummelstown, when certain demands that they had made upon the company, in reference to payment for work completed by contract, were not complied with. They refused to permit the company or any other party to come upon the ground to resume construction.

*The Lebanon Courier* of December 11 recorded that on the fourth an attempt was made by Osborne, chief engineer, to run a locomotive over the bridge crossing the Swatara. The locomotive was met at the bridge by the Laumans who told Osborne that he could not run the engine upon it since it was not yet in order for use and was still in their hands. The chief engineer became very much enraged at this statement and declared that he was determined to cross if he had to force his way. Osborne returned to Hummelstown for assistance and in a short time returned to the bridge with about a hundred Irishmen employed in putting the finishing touches on a section of the road over which the trains were then running. He was met by the employees of the contractors who outnumbered his own force. He retreated, threatening to return the next day with two hundred men and achieve his object by force of arms. The workmen of the Laumans had not been paid, inasmuch as their employers had

78. *The Lebanon Courier*, October 30, 1857.



not received payment for their contract, and feared that, if the right to pass over the bridge were once granted to the railroad officers, the contract would be taken out of the hands of their employers and they would be left unpaid. Sentinels were posted Friday night to watch for the approach of Osborne's party and horns placed in the hands of the watchers "to raise the hue and cry" if their antagonists appeared. During the night the trussel built by Osborne's men was torn down by the defenders of the bridge.

The editor of the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* said that on Monday, December 7, a large force of about 150 men who had left Harrisburg on the order of Osborne had arrived at the bridge and found it fortified by the workmen of the contractors with a formidable battery of swivels and muskets. The defenders fled, however, and the company immediately took possession of the armament and declared that the contract of the belligerent contractors was forfeit.⁷⁹

The *Courier* of December 11, 1857 carried a report of the expenses of construction and operation, monthly receipts during the months of July, August, September, and October, and the net profit during this period. The total expenditures on the road at that date, including construction, interest, engineering, land damages, track, real estate along the line and at Reading, Lebanon, and Harrisburg, the telegraph line, the loss on the sale of bonds, and sundries amounted to \$3,226,620.60. The monthly receipts rose from over two thousand five hundred from the seventeenth to the thirtieth of July to over five thousand dollars in August. The receipts fell to just above \$4,700 in September but rose to nearly \$5,000 in October. Total receipts for the four-month period amounted to \$17,346.28, while the running expenses totaled

79. This was probably the incident referred to by J. V. Hare in his account of the history of the Reading Railroad Company in *The Pilot and Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Men*. Hare said that on one occasion one of the contractors threw over his contract, but Osborne saved considerable time by meeting all the subcontractors in his office on the following day and re-letting to each one his contract at the same sum as he was to have received from the original contractor.

\$13,220.33, leaving a net profit of \$4,125.95 from July 17 to October 31.

The telegraph line mentioned above was put into operation from Lebanon to Harrisburg in the latter part of December, as it appeared that the entire line would be in running condition soon after the first of January, 1859. Such indeed was the case, for on January 18 the cars were first run from Reading to Harrisburg with ten passenger cars attached. On this occasion half of the cars were filled at the eastern terminus by the Reading Rifles under the command of Capt. F. S. Boas, the City Band of Reading, Major General Keim with his staff of four officers, and fifty citizens who planned to stay at Harrisburg for the inauguration of William F. Packer as Governor on the following day. Passengers boarded the train at all points along the line, including the Perseverance Sax Horn Band and the Washington Artillery under the command of Capt. Jacob Embich. By the time that the train arrived at Harrisburg just after noon there were 1,000 passengers on board. Those purchasing excursion tickets returned home on the morning of the twentieth.

Trains for the regular runs left Reading at ten minutes past ten in the morning and arrived at Harrisburg at 12:50 P.M. in time to connect with the trains for Pittsburgh, Lancaster, Treverton, and Pinegrove. The cars left the western terminus at 2:45 P.M., after the arrival of trains from the same places. The fare to travel the length of the road was \$1.60, first class; or \$1.30, second class. Fares from Lebanon to Harrisburg were seventy-five and sixty cents respectively. John J. Clyde was ticket agent at Harrisburg at the opening of traffic the entire length of the road.

During 1857 the directors of the Philadelphia and Reading and the Lebanon Valley Railroad Companies had drawn up suitable articles of consolidation and merger. When the stockholders of the two companies were to meet for their annual meetings on January 11, it was planned to submit these articles of consolidation for consideration and approval, in accordance with the act of May 5, 1857. However, several

days before the meetings of the stockholders an application to prevent the consolidation was made to the Supreme Court sitting in Philadelphia by George M. Lauman who was a stockholder of the Lebanon Valley and had been one of the contractors on the section west of Hummelstown on which the trouble had arisen with Osborne over the question of the running of the locomotive over the Swatara bridge. Lauman, disgruntled over his defeat on that occasion, was now apparently determined to embarrass the company as much as possible in the matter of consolidation. The case was argued before the court on the ninth of January. Lauman, represented by John M. Read, claimed that the act of the Legislature authorizing consolidation was in violation of a section of the Constitution of the United States (Art. I, Section 10) and several sections of the Constitution of the Commonwealth (Art. 9, sections 10 and 17; Art. 7, Section 4) and that the proceedings under the act were void without the unanimous consent of the stockholders of the Valley Road. The case for the company was argued by lawyers Meredith and St. George Tucker Campbell. The court ordered that the election on the matter by the stockholders of the Lebanon Valley Railroad in Reading be held, but that the certificate of result should not be filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth until further order from the court.⁸⁰

The stockholders of the Lebanon Valley met on the eleventh, Cameron again being re-elected to serve the ensuing year, and the membership of the board of directors remaining the same with two exceptions. Samuel Bell and John Tucker were replaced by John Banks and James Millholland. When the matter of consideration of the articles of consolidation was brought up, the vote was 4,851 in favor of the consolidation and merger and 222 against it. When the stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading met at Philadelphia on the same day, it was resolved that the vote on the subject should be postponed until March 8, when they should again meet to

80. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, January 16, 1858.



consider the question, in view of the application for injunction by Lauman.

The court met again to take up the Lauman case on January 16, the counsel for Lauman contending that the act of the Legislature impaired the obligation of contract, that Lauman could not be asked to assume the liabilities of a stockholder of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, and that this act was in violation of the act of incorporation. The court decided against Lauman, declaring that a single stockholder could not have an injunction to restrain a corporation from transferring all its property to another company with which it was authorized to consolidate if it cared to do so. The court also said that the dissolution had merely been permitted by the Legislature and that the act of dissolution was an act of the members of the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company and not one of the Legislature. However, though the Legislature could pass the act authorizing consolidation and merger, Lauman's interest could not be divested by the company without the giving of security. Moreover, stock of the Philadelphia and Reading could not be imposed on the plaintiff by the Lebanon Valley as compensation without his consent. Hence, it was ordered that the injunction be issued on Lauman's giving security to \$1,000 to the Lebanon Valley Company, but that it was to be dissolved on the company's giving Lauman compensation to double the market value of his stock.⁸¹

Even before the decision of the court had been rendered, Lauman used as much influence as he could command to have a bill presented to the Legislature to repeal the act of 1857 authorizing consolidation. William C. Lawrence of Dauphin County read such a bill in the House of the Legislature on January 11. As soon as this was learned, a town meeting was called by "Many Citizens" to meet in the Court House in Reading on January 16 to take some action in reference to

81. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, January 23, 1858; *Brightly*, *op. cit.*; Columns 408, *Pepper and Lewis*, *op. cit.*; Columns 3414, 3559, 5093, 5182, 5222.

this bill. When the first train was run from Reading to Harrisburg two days later, one of the passengers was Frederick Lower, the bearer of dispatches from the Councils and citizens of Reading against the passage of the bill for repeal. The bill passed into committee in the House and was not reported to that body until February 25, and then with a negative recommendation. In his efforts to have the repealing bill passed, Lauman was seconded and supported by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company which warmly urged the passage of the measure.

When the adjourned meeting of the stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company was held in Philadelphia on March 8 to consider the matter of consolidation, there was not a dissenting vote in the 130,084 cast at the election. The Articles of Consolidation provided that all rights, franchises, privileges, real estate and property of every description belonging to the Lebanon Valley Railroad should be transferred to the Philadelphia and Reading, the holders of the stock in the former road to be entitled on July 1, 1858, to one share in the latter company for each share in the Lebanon Valley held by them. The holders of stock in the Lebanon Valley Company were not to be entitled to any dividend declared by the company before the first of January, 1858. After the exchange of stock, the holders of stock so exchanged were to be entitled to vote at all meetings of the stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Company and to have the same rights and privileges as other stockholders of the company. Stockholders who still owed installments on the Lebanon Valley were to receive stock in the Philadelphia upon payment of the amounts due. All unissued capital stock of the Lebanon Valley was to be transferred to the Philadelphia and Reading. The latter company was to assume all debts, contracts, engagements, and liabilities of the former company and to receive all books, vouchers, records and other documents pertaining to the business of the Lebanon Valley Railroad. The Philadelphia and Reading was to

complete the entire road as soon as it could be conveniently done.⁸²

Nothing in the act authorizing consolidation or in the articles agreed upon by the managers of the two companies provided for the assumption by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad of the stock subscribed by the City of Reading and the Borough of Lebanon. An attempt was made to include such a provision in the act of the Legislature, it will be recalled, but was defeated. The directors of the Philadelphia and Reading had met in the earlier part of June, 1857, and determined to assume this indebtedness as a preliminary arrangement to the consolidation. The City of Reading had approved of consolidation, especially upon being assured that the Philadelphia and Reading would return the city bonds and assume the subscription. Some doubt was expressed that the subscription would be assumed. The editor of the *Courier* in the issue of January 8, 1858, said that it had cost the Borough four thousand dollars a year for interest on the subscription, which gave a total of nineteen thousand dollars in taxes to be paid annually by the citizens. In a letter to John Henry, director representing the Councils of Reading, dated January 11, 1858, Cameron said that he and Cullen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, had agreed that the stock of the City of Reading would be assumed by the Philadelphia and Reading and that the bonds would be returned to the City. Cameron pledged that the agreement would be fulfilled.⁸³ The *Courier* of December 3, 1858, reported that an exchange of one-half of the stock held by the Borough of Lebanon had been effected, leaving five hundred shares to be exchanged for bonds of the Borough. It was reported two weeks later that all of the stock subscribed by the City of Reading, except one hundred shares, had been assumed by the Philadelphia and Reading

82. *Articles of Consolidation and Merger of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company and the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company.*

83. *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, January 16, 1858.



Railroad on December 13. In return thereof, the City had received bonds issued in 1853 to make the subscription.

Prior to the building of the railroad, the mails had been carried from Reading to Harrisburg by way of Lebanon by stage over the Harrisburg Turnpike. With the completion of the road as far as Lebanon, the carriage of mails to that point from Reading was given to the Lebanon Valley. At Lebanon the mail was transferred to a stage for the remainder of the distance to Harrisburg. However, this arrangement was found to give even poorer service than the one using the turnpike, since the arrival and departure of trains at Lebanon and Reading was fixed at inconvenient times. A letter mailed in Philadelphia on Monday morning would not reach Lebanon until midnight Tuesday, according to the *Berks and Schuylkill Journal* of August 8, 1857. The mail from Reading to Harrisburg was again carried by stage-coach in August, enabling persons along the line to receive newspapers, as well as letters, from Reading and Philadelphia on the same day as they were mailed. When the line was complete to Harrisburg in 1858, and the contract on this route was transferred by the Post Office Department to the Lebanon Valley Railroad in February, letters for the West left Lebanon at 11:30 in the morning and those for the East at four o'clock in the afternoon. George W. Weaver, editor of the *Democrat* at Harrisburg, received the appointment as mail agent on the road at \$7,000 a year. Mail messengers to carry the mails from the railroad stations to the post offices of the towns through which the road passed were as follows: Sinking Springs, Harry Heffner; Furnace (Robesonia), Berks County, Samuel Shearer; Womelsdorf, John H. Sell; Stouchsburg, Jonathan Mayberry; Myerstown, Martin Gillett;⁸⁴ Lebanon, John Penn; Annville, P. William Getz; Hummelstown, David H. Baum; and Harrisburg, George

⁸⁴. *The Lebanon Courier* of February 26, 1858, carrying a record of the appointment of the mail messenger for Myerstown, said that the name Martin H. Gillett was probably meant for Martin H. Gettel of that place.

Moyer.⁸⁵ The service was to be performed twice daily, except on Sunday. An accident of but slight consequence was recorded in February when the cars were detained near Harrisburg on the sixth by a locomotive running off the track and the down passenger train was unable to pass. A telegram was sent to Reading, and another train was dispatched, which brought the passengers to Lebanon at eight o'clock in the evening instead of at four P.M.

A reduction of rates on freight in March of 1858 was certain to bring new traffic upon the road. The new rates per ton were as follows:

	<i>Company's cars</i>	<i>Private cars</i>
Pig iron, blooms, iron ore, salt, etc.		
Lebanon to Philadelphia .....	\$1.82	\$1.36
Lebanon to Reading .....	1.03	.77
Anthracite or bituminous coal		
Harrisburg to Lebanon .....	\$ .76	\$ .66

These rates were to become effective on April 1. Another inducement to travel on the road was an announcement in May that a passenger car would be attached to the morning freight train arriving at Harrisburg at noon in time to connect with the North Central passenger train going south to York, Baltimore, and Washington. The fare from Lebanon to Baltimore was \$3.10; that from Reading to the same city was \$3.80.

At first the Lebanon Valley Railroad had no terminal facilities at Harrisburg. It appeared that the directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad looked with considerable favor upon the proposition to unite at Harrisburg their road with that of the Lebanon Valley Company. Osborne wisely advised the managers of the Lebanon Valley to postpone action until more definite information could be obtained concerning the accommodations and facilities proposed to be furnished by the Pennsylvania. Meeting with Thompson, president of the Pennsylvania Road, and Yeager, president of the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster Railroad, to examine

85. *The Lebanon Courier*, February 19, February 26, and March 12, 1858; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, February 27, 1858.

their plans, the chief engineer on the Valley Road departed from the meeting without expressing an opinion on the matter. Driving by team to Reading, he attended a hurriedly called meeting of the managers of the Lebanon Valley and declared against the plan, claiming that it was a scheme to cut the Lebanon Valley Road from connections with any railroad out of Harrisburg and advising that steps be made to secure possession of the land above the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mt. Joy, and Lancaster, Railroad depot south of the Pennsylvania Canal and fronting on Market Street.

On the following morning at 5 A.M. the wily and energetic engineer of the company departed for Harrisburg, where he secured legal advice and prepared bonds which he proposed to offer to the owners of the land which he desired. When these bonds were served on the owners on the following day, the officials of the Pennsylvania Railroad attempted to take possession of the same pieces of ground by legal process, as Osborne had anticipated. An extensive legal battle resulted before the land required for the terminal was acquired. Finally securing strips of land for the new terminal, the directors found that this space was too narrow to allow the erection of a suitable station with terminal facilities. Consequently, plans were drawn to move the old line and lock of the Pennsylvania Canal some feet to the east to give more room for the station. This plan was called excellent despite the influence of the canal commissioners and the officers of the railroads having termini at Harrisburg. The opposition of these roads was based on the fear of a competitor with a line running into Harrisburg with the opportunity of perhaps making an extension north, south, or west.

But President Cameron used his influence to have a contract agreed to by the Canal Commissioners on June 10, 1857, by which authority was obtained to change the location of the line and to build the new lock required for such a change. An act of May 18, 1857, had authorized the canal commissioners to change the location of the canal between State and Chestnut Streets if the interest of the public required it and to make



a contract with the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company for the payment of part of the expenses of the alterations as might be agreed upon by the railroad company and the canal commissioners. In the meeting of June 10 at Harrisburg, President Mott of the Board of Canal Commissioners presented a contract with the Lebanon Valley which was read, approved, and executed. The Lebanon Valley agreed to make the necessary alterations in the line of the canal along with the locks, embankments, and other works necessary to the use of the canal and to pay all damages to holders of property for the change in the line. Plans and specifications of the work were to be furnished by the state engineer. The canal commissioners agreed to pay, the railroad company \$18,000 for the advantages to the canal as a result of the alterations upon approval and acceptance of the work by one of the state engineers. However, in the event of the sale of the main line of the public works, the Commonwealth was not to be liable for this amount or any portion of the cost of the work.⁸⁶ This work was to be done by the Lebanon Valley Railroad Company under the direction of Osborne during the season when navigation on the canal was suspended. This work was contracted by the company to Colder and DeHaven. It was reported in August, 1857, that about 100 laborers were at work on the opposite side of the lock, then in use, making the new channel for the canal. The line of the new channel was to run through the meadow land east of the old canal to some point below the borough where it was to join the old line of the channel. When pressure of the time had forced suspension of operations on the railroad in October of 1857, Colder and DeHaven, together with Irwin, contractor on the section of the road adjoining

86. Annual Report of the Board of Canal Commissioners, With Accompanying Documents, For the fiscal year ending November 30, 1857 in *Reports of the Heads of Departments, Transmitted to the Governor in Pursuance of Law, For the Fiscal Year Ending Nov. 30, 1857*, 18-19; Journal of The Board of Canal Commissioners For The Fiscal Year Ending November 30, 1857 in *ibid*; [Meeting of Wednesday, June 10, 1857.]

Harrisburg, discharged 550 laborers. In order that they might fulfill their contract with the canal commissioners and that not even the slightest delay might occur in the opening of the canal to navigation in the spring, the managers of the Lebanon Valley gave Colder and DeHaven a bonus of \$8,000 to keep their hands at work during the entire winter. A certificate of inspection was given to Osborne by the state engineer in the spring of 1858 upon completion and inspection of the change.

Cullen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, received the certificate and attempted to collect the cost of the work from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company which had meanwhile become the owner of the canal. The Pennsylvania Company had not forgotten that it had been very cleverly outwitted in the obtaining of the land necessary for the right of way and station purposes by the Lebanon Valley Road and refused to pay the bill,⁷ claiming that the "mitre-sill" of the lock was one-half an inch above the correct level, despite the fact that the change had been approved by the state engineer. Refusal of payment followed time and time again until the bill finally became outlawed.

During the building of the new lock and channel all the buildings on the site for the proposed terminal were removed, and a double track iron Howe truss bridge was constructed to carry the trains of the Lebanon Valley line over the canal into the station to be built on the western side of Market Street. In January of 1858 construction was begun on a large ware-house to be used temporarily as a depot until the alterations in the canal were made and a new depot constructed. Foundations for the new depot were laid in May, 1858, and the contract for the huge iron roof which was to be placed upon heavy girders in the fall of the year was let to D. R. Jones.

Before Osborne could complete the station which he had planned and already had under construction, an argument arose between him and the engineer whose plans for the

building of the entire line of the road had been replaced by those of Osborne in 1853. Having been aroused years before because of this, the second engineer now neglected no opportunity to bring discredit to the work of his successor, the Harrisburg terminal, in particular. And now having won the good will of Cullen, who appointed him to a position of importance in the road, he began to annoy and disturb Osborne in the work on the terminal and made several efforts to have the engineer's extensive plans completely changed. The station which Osborne had planned for the west side of Market Street, between the Canal and Canal Street, was to be ninety feet wide and three hundred feet long, fronting on Canal Street. This would have made the Lebanon Valley station longer than that of the Pennsylvania Railroad and thirty feet wider. The station, the main passenger entrance of which was to be on Canal Street, was to contain a ticket office, baggage department, and all the essentials for a first-class depot.

However, Osborne resigned as chief engineer on construction on June 30, 1858, and the plans were immediately modified. As a result, a terminal with limited facilities took the place of the more elaborate one planned by Osborne in the expectation of a large growth of business. The completion of the iron bridge in July of the same year enabled the Lebanon Valley to effect a connection with other roads leading to Harrisburg. Work was begun at the end of the month to build a branch track to connect with the Pennsylvania depot, into which the passenger trains of the Valley line were run until the new depot was completed. It was reported in September of 1858 that a large force of men was engaged in completing the foundation walls of the new structure. The work was carried on until the station, a long



frame building, was completed in 1859 at an expense of \$13,061.16 in that year alone.⁸⁷

The issues of *The Lebanon Courier* of May 1858 carried some very interesting information on the road from newspapers in other sections of the State and elsewhere. The amount of express matter passing over the Lebanon Valley daily was so great that the express agent in Reading was obliged to obtain a small truck car for the transference of freight from Philadelphia to the Harrisburg trains. A great portion of the road was entirely level and the precise grade was indicated on index boards along the line. When the grade changed, posts were placed with arms on each side inclined in the direction of the grade with the number of feet to the mile painted thereon, or if the portion of the road was level, the arm was extended in a right angle and the word "level" substituted. On each side of a country road or lane, or wherever a whistle was required, posts with a large "W" were placed. Similarly, posts were planted at each mile along the line, designating the distances to each terminus. Names of stations were indicated in large letters. All crossings were protected and the road was well fenced.⁸⁸ A letter to the editor of the *Courier*, from a reader signing his communication "Mill Creek," in reference to the building of a wagon road from Schaefferstown to Missimer's station, mentioned that the people of Schaefferstown were greatly disappointed in relation to the location of the Lebanon Valley Railroad and deeply regretted that they were not blessed with a railroad through the center of their town.⁸⁹

During the summer and early fall of 1858 many persons took advantage of the completion of the railroad to Harris-

87. The details of construction of the terminal at Harrisburg have been taken from the following sources: J. V. Hare, *op. cit.*; Vol. XI Nos. *Courier*, August 21 and October 23, 1857, May 14, and July 23, 1858; *Berks and Schuylkill Journal*, January 9, May 29, July 31, and September 25, 1858; *Annual Reports of the Presidents and Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company to the Stockholders*, 1856 to 1869.

88. *The Lebanon Courier*, May 7 and May 28, 1858.

89. *The Lebanon Courier*, May 14, 1858.

burg for the holding of picnics and the like. On June 29 the Methodist Sunday School of Harrisburg went by the railroad to Spring Creek near Hummelstown where the day was spent in celebrating their annual picnic. Two others of these excursions were run in the first days of July, when it was reported that the number who passed over the Lebanon Valley from Harrisburg on July 2 to pass the day in the vicinity of Derry Church was not less than seven hundred. Two days later, on the Fourth of July, the German Reformed Sunday School of Lebanon spent the day at Womelsdorf, having made the trip by railroad. Excursion trains of particular interest to the people of Lebanon were those running from Harrisburg to Lebanon on October 6, 7, and 8 for the convenience of those who wished to attend the first annual exhibition of the Lebanon County Agricultural and Horticultural Society in Lebanon on those days.

The summer schedule was so arranged in 1858 that the passenger train left Reading about ten o'clock in the morning and arrived in Harrisburg about half past twelve. The return train reached Reading about 5 P.M. For the convenience of passengers on the road, a morning train from Harrisburg was put on the line in the beginning of September, which met the down-train of the Philadelphia and Reading at Reading. This train did not begin the return trip to Harrisburg until seven o'clock in the evening, thus connecting with the evening down and up-trains of the Philadelphia and Reading line. This new train stopped at Lebanon at seven o'clock in the morning long enough to allow passengers to breakfast at the Lebanon Valley House. Passenger travel on the road had so increased by the middle of October that three trains were run daily from Reading to Harrisburg. The train added by this new arrangement passed through Lebanon on the way to Harrisburg at seven o'clock in the morning.

The report of Cullen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading, to the stockholders of his company on January 10, 1859, gives a fair idea of the effects not only of the completion of the road to Harrisburg, but also of the building of

the entire line. Cullen reported that the cost of building the road to November 30, 1858 (including roadway, bridges, depots, real estate, interest on bonds, land damages, and the loss on the bonds of the Philadelphia and Reading Company) amounted to \$4,419,976.38. Expenses of the Roadway Department during the period April to November included the cost of repairing and ballasting the Lebanon Valley which amounted to \$16,405.93. During the time that the Lebanon Valley had been in the hands of his company, depot tracks and a water station had been built at Lebanon. Expenditures still to be made included those for the completion of the depot at Harrisburg, the improvements and completion of the connections with other railroads at Reading and Harrisburg, and the payment of certain land damages, the amounts of which had not yet been determined by juries.

The net earnings on the Lebanon Valley from April to November totaled \$41,436.72, increasing from \$9,241.03 in April to \$18,113.75 in October, being at the rate of nearly 5% on the costs of the road. In 1850, it will be remembered Steele, engineer making the survey of the Valley route, had estimated that the profits on the road would total \$100,000 per year. At the rate that money was flowing into the coffers of the Philadelphia and Reading Company in October, 1858, the business of the Valley branch would be more than double this sum if traffic continued to pass over the road at the rate which it was during October. This sum, however, would be nearly \$100,000 short of the \$306,077 profit estimated by Osborne in April, 1854, in his report to the directors of the Lebanon Valley. Cullen said that the profit realized on the valley branch during the eight months that it had been under the direction of the Philadelphia and Reading was more satisfactory than one might at first believe, since very little coal and iron ore had passed over the road during this period. A large demand for both would arise in the spring upon the revival of the iron trade and the completion of all furnaces in the Lebanon and Schuylkill Valleys.



The total number of passengers carried was 61,324 for a total distance of 1,300,522 miles or a passenger traffic of 24,084 individuals carried the entire length of the line, bringing \$37,642.60 to the company on this business. Revenue from the carriage of freight, one-half of which was iron ore and anthracite and bituminous coal, amounted to \$47,742.68, while the sums reaped from the carrying of mail and express matter amounted to \$3,600 and \$2,400 respectively. The total receipts for the branch were \$91,285.28, and expenses for the running of the road for the eight months (running of passenger and freight trains, money paid to hands at depots and water stations, salaries of all agents, office expenditures, and maintenance) totaled \$49,948.56, leaving net earnings of \$41,436.72 as indicated above. What was of especial interest to the stockholders of the Philadelphia and Reading Company was that the amount earned on the main line of the road from the business of the Lebanon Valley, without extra trains and at a very trifling expense, was \$55,995.60 (from the transportation of 10,057 passengers and 49,280 tons of freight).

In the first full year that the Lebanon Valley Railroad was in control of the Philadelphia and Reading, 1859, total receipts amounted to \$206,828.00, and the expenses totaled \$94,009.85 for a net profit on the line of \$112,618.15. The amount earned on the main line of the Philadelphia and Reading from the same business was \$246,788.15, even greater than that on the valley branch itself.⁹⁰ The Lebanon Valley had truly become a feeder to the Reading System.

Thus we come to the end of the story of the building of the Lebanon Valley Railroad. It is impossible, of course, to accurately ascertain the results accruing from the construction of the railroad through the valley. But of this we can be certain—that without the railroad, the growth of Lebanon as a city of industrial and manufacturing importance would have

90. *Annual Reports of the Presidents and Managers of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company to the Stockholders, 1856 to 1869.*

been greatly retarded, and that the development of the Cornwall ore mines would not have progressed so rapidly as it did. The city and county have benefited immensely by the road in increases in population, value of land, wages offered to labor and the demand for the latter, by increased demand for the products of the valley, by the establishment of new business within the limits of the county resulting from carriage of raw materials to our valley at a lower cost, and their being worked up into finished products and sent to the markets of the state and nation, and by untold advantages coming to this day to the people of the county from the completion of the railroad.

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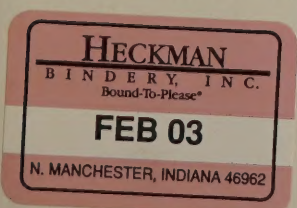
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